

## Cabinet approves accords with Israel

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers on Saturday approved cooperation agreements signed recently with Israel. These include accords on transport, aviation services, scientific and cultural cooperation, postal services, communications, marine borders and Agaba-Eilat interaction. These agreements will now be referred to His Majesty the King for approval. The Council of Ministers, meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, also decided to extend \$16,888 in assistance to the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) Ministry of Youth to help it in carrying out its duties. It also decided to cover wage workers at the ministry of agriculture with the civil health insurance. Furthermore, it decided to set up a delegation headed by the Ministry of Planning to hold negotiations with the World Bank on credit facilities worth \$30 million and a \$500,000 loan to be used in supporting Jordanian exports. The Cabinet also decided to retire Secretary General of the Civil Service Commission Mohammad Al Shawabkeh as of Feb. 1.

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## King hosts iftar

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday held an iftar at Al Hussein Youth City in honour of senior serving and retired officers of the Armed Forces and Public Security, General Intelligence and Civil Defence Departments as well as the Palestine Liberation Army stationed in Jordan. Present at the banquet was His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein, Prince Talal Ben Mohammad and Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff General Abdul Hafez Mir'at and other officials.

## Army stages coup in Niger

NIAMEY (AFP) — Niger's army leader, Colonel Barré Maïnassara, said Saturday that President Mahamane Ousmane and his government had been ousted and political parties suspended until further notice. Speaking on national radio, Col. Maïnassara declared a state of emergency across Niger as of Saturday and said a curfew would be imposed between 9:00 p.m. (1200 GMT) and 5:30 a.m. (0430 GMT). A national committee had been set up to wield all powers, he said, adding that Nigerians should remain calm and "understand the meaning of our action which is to save Niger from jeopardy."

## Eritrea condemns Yemeni escalation

CAIRO (AFP) — Eritrea accused Yemen on Saturday of "escalating" the two countries' dispute over a Red Sea archipelago by flying warplanes over the Eritrean-occupied atoll of Hanish Al Kabir. Eritrean Foreign Minister Butros Salaman condemned "the latest Yemeni escalation in which a number of Yemeni planes flew over Eritrean forces stationed on the island on Wednesday." Eritrea's ambassador to Cairo said. In a letter to Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, Mr. Salaman denounced the Yemeni move, "particularly at a time when numerous sides, Egyptian, Ethiopian and French, are working to find a peaceful solution to the dispute." Ambassador Mohammad Ali Omru, who delivered the letter, said. Sanaa said Friday that Eritrea had begun reinforcing its troops on the strategic island at the mouth of the Red Sea and had demanded that Yemen recall its ambassador from Asmara.

## Saudi hospital fire kills 13, injured 33

DUBAI (R) — Thirteen people died and 33 were injured after a fire swept through a hospital in the Holy City of Mecca in Saudi Arabia on Friday, a Saudi civil defence official said on Saturday. The Saudi Press Agency quoted the official as saying the dead were of different nationalities and died from smoke and gas inhalation in the fire, which started as a result of electrical problems in the Alawi-Tunisi Hospital.

## Wife of Vaclav Havel dies of cancer

PRAGUE (AFP) — Olgia Havlova, wife and key supporter of Czech President Vaclav Havel, died on Saturday of cancer at the age of 62, the president's office announced. Havlova had been admitted to hospital at the beginning of the month. Her husband took her home on Thursday as her condition deteriorated. The president's office said she would be buried at a private funeral attended only by her family. It did say when or where. Havlova was a staunch supporter of her husband as he rose from dissident playwright to president after the so-called Velvet Revolution in 1989 that ended 41 years of communist rule in what had been Czechoslovakia.



Serb prisoners of war being released in Sarajevo on Saturday (Reuter photo)

## Bosnia PoW release resumed

SARAJEVO (R) — The release of prisoners from Bosnia's 3½-year war resumed on Saturday after a week-long pause when the mainly-Muslim government and Bosnian Croats freed 242 Serbs, a Red Cross spokesman said. The Bosnian Serbs said their 180 prisoners would be released on Sunday. "They will be released tomorrow," said Dragan Bulajic, head of the Serb prisoner exchange commission.

Most of the freed Serbs were brought to Sarajevo's rain-swept airport, considered neutral territory during the war and now held by Implementation Force (IFOR) peacekeeping troops. The Croats sent 127 from Mostar in southwest Bosnia and the government 77 from Sarajevo. They sat around in buses for several hours but by nightfall there was no sign of any prisoners being released from the Serb side of the tarmac. International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) spokesman Pierre Gauthier said the government freed another 38 Serbs near Zenica in central Bosnia but there were no details. Other prisoner releases were due to take place in central and northwestern Bosnia on Saturday but there was no word on whether they had taken place or not. The Bosnian factions met on Friday and agreed to free all their prisoners, belatedly meeting their commitments under the peace agreement signed last month in Paris. The head of the Croats' exchange commission, Benislav Pusic, told the Bosnian Croat news agency Habena that some Serbs accused of war crimes were not being released.

## Yemen tribesmen free 1 of 17 French hostages

SANAA (Agencies) — Yemeni tribesmen on Saturday released a bus driver and one of 17 elderly French tourists kidnapped in an eastern province two days ago as the army stepped up pressure to free the hostages, the provincial governor said. Abdul Wali Al Shamiri said the unidentified male tourist was set free unharmed after a French diplomat visited the tribesmen who have held the group since Thursday. The governor did not give the reason for the release, saying only that the tourist was "in good health" and had to travel to the Yemeni capital Sanaa for personal reasons. He said the tourists still being held in Al Ain village in southeastern Shabwa province were all elderly. In Paris, the foreign ministry confirmed that one of the hostages had been freed. Members of the Al Aslam tribe ambushed the two bus-

loads of French tourists on Thursday as they returned to Sanaa from a sight-seeing tour to Marib, 180 kilometres (110 miles) east of the capital. The kidnappers are calling for the release of a fellow tribesman, Zeinallah Duman, jailed three months ago for abducting an American national last September. He is one of two men awaiting trial for the September kidnapping of Bill Spencer, an American oilman, and a Yemeni over a business dispute. The two were released the same month. The kidnapping of the French tourists marked the second time this year that Yemeni tribes have taken foreigners hostage. In recent years, tribes in Yemen with grievances against the government or oil firms have kidnapped foreigners to use as bargaining chips. There have been no reported casualties.

of Palestinian origin, following the 1990-91 Gulf crisis. In two publications disclosing the 1994 census results, there is mention of neither displaced persons nor refugees, although the questionnaire distributed in 1994 made thorough inquiry into the origin of household members. The questionnaire asked residents if they were: Refugees of 1948? Displaced persons of 1967? Refugees then displaced? From the Gaza Strip? or a returnee due to the Gulf crisis? It also asked for date and place of birth of the occupants, their parents and grandparents' length of residency in present location and last place of residency.

As to the issue of displaced people, Dr. Alawin said: "The general public has a definition and the political establishment has its own definition and we found that categorising these statistics will only add to the confusion." According to the census results, 92.4 per cent of Jordan's four million plus population are Jordanian and 7.6 are non-Jordanian. Dr. Alawin said that Jordanians were classified as those who hold Jordanian passports, including two- and five-year passport holders. As of December 1994, returnees from the Gulf numbered 216,133, constituting

## Constructive criticism is welcome, PM tells editors of political press

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government respects the opposition as an integral part of the democratic process and political pluralism in Jordan, but it expects from any opposition to the government to be based on sound foundation and in the form of constructive criticism. Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker said Saturday. "We do not expect nor can we tolerate opposition activities that are aimed at carrying out sabotage against Jordan or instigating any distortion of the image of this country and its achievements realised over the past 50 years," said the prime minister, who was addressing editors of weekly and political parties' newspapers. Speaking in the presence of Minister of Information

Khaled Karaki, Sharif Zeid said that "neither this government nor any other previous one has ever instructed officials not to speak to the press." "The government respects the media's right to express its views in various constructive ways," he said. The government is also committed to create the right democratic atmosphere to allow the media to exercise its role freely and responsibly, said the prime minister, who added that doors were open to the media without discrimination. Sharif Zeid urged the local press to encourage people to help create the right atmosphere for imparting Islamic teachings and religious values and true Arab and Islamic heritage to the young genera-

tion. The judiciary, the prime minister said, enjoys absolute independence. The executive authority can by no means interfere with the work of the judiciary, he said. A recent instance of newspaper editors facing trial in courts is the case of Fahed Rimawi, chief editor of Al Majid weekly, who is currently tried before a criminal court. The charge against Mr. Rimawi is that his paper published writings that were considered as harming Jordan's relations with another country. The charge against Mr. Rimawi was motivated by an article by an exiled Bahraini leader who called for the removal of the British chief

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## Arafat arrives

AMMAN (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat arrived here Saturday for talks with His Majesty King Hussein on Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation and with Palestinian personalities on convening a Palestinian National Council (PNC) meeting to amend clauses in the Palestinian charter that implies a call for the destruction of Israel. In his talks with the King, Mr. Arafat was expected to seek a consolidation of Jordan's support for Palestinian statehood and the Kingdom's help in facilitating negotiations with Israel on a final settlement of the Palestinian issue. The Palestinian leader flew in from Egypt on his first trip abroad since he was elected president of the Palestinian self-rule council Jan. 20. King Hussein greeted the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) at the airport. After talks with the monarch, Mr. Arafat was expected to meet with Jordan-based PNC members to urge them to join efforts to repeal clauses in the Palestinian charter that call for the elimination of Israel. Omar Khatib, chief of the PLO mission here, told the AP Mr. Arafat would seek a Jordanian reaffirmation of its support for a Palestinian state. Mr. Khatib said Mr. Arafat will also ask Jordan to "intervene with the Israelis on all matters related to the final phase of the negotiations" on the future of the West Bank and Gaza. Mr. Khatib said Mr. Arafat will ask officials for maps and documents on the West Bank. Earlier, Mr. Arafat held talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and won his endorsement for the establishment of a Palestinian state. The solution to the Palestinian issue and comprehensive peace... is the establishment of the Palestinian state," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said. (Continued on page 7)

## Syria: Security differences with Israel unsettled

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria's chief negotiator to peace talks with Israel has said ongoing negotiations in the United States have highlighted the differences and gaps that separates both countries on security arrangements. The official Syrian news agency SANA quoted Walid Al Muallem as saying the talks have dealt "deeply and seriously" with the security arrangements to be implemented after a proposed Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights. "Each side presented his position regarding security arrangements on the two sides of June 4, 1967, lines after the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from the Golan," Mr. Muallem said. "The talks highlighted the existing difficulties and gaps between the points of view of the two sides regarding these arrangements," he added. Syrian and Israeli teams to talks are trying to break an over four-year deadlock in the talks over Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights, security arrangements and future ties. Talks broke off last year for six months when Damascus rejected an Israeli proposal to keep early warning stations in the strategic Golan after the proposed withdrawal. Mr. Muallem said the talks provided the chance for both sides to "explain the positions and explore the points of view of each side regarding these arrangements with all

their different sides." Mr. Muallem said U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who took part in this week's talks, "assured the U.S. was determined to continue efforts to secure a peace deal between Israel and Syria and Lebanon during the this year 1996." Syria and Lebanon, Israel's only Arab neighbours who have not yet made peace with the Jewish state, are coordinating their steps in peace talks with Israel. Mr. Muallem said U.S. peace coordinator Dennis Ross would hold unofficial consultations on Saturday and Sunday before resuming the talks on Monday. Mr. Christopher will return to Israel in February for a new Middle East peace shuttle hoping to build on progress in the resumed Israeli-Syrian peace talks, Israeli television said. It said the U.S. envoy would return on Feb. 5 and travel between Israel and Syria to review the results of the negotiations taking place at Wye Plantation, Maryland. Even though Mr. Christopher has warned he does not think the latest talks will achieve a major breakthrough in the on-off negotiations launched in October 1991, he believes the results will merit a follow-up visit to the region. He told Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres by telephone on Friday that he was "encouraged" by the

(Continued on page 7)

## Population categorisation not in national interest — official

By Alia Toukan and Amy Henderson  
Jordan Times Staff Reporters  
AMMAN — The long-awaited results of Jordan's 1994 population census, released Saturday, failed to address the issue that most piques the minds of Jordanians — the number of Jordanians of Palestinian origin living in the Kingdom. "The government has decided that categorising the statistics (relative to the question of people of Palestinian origin) would not be in anyone's interest," Director General of the Department of Statistics Abdul Hadi Alawin said in an answer to a question at a press conference held at the department

offices in Jubeiha. "It would not put an end to the issue; rather it will further confuse it. So it was decided that this would not be dealt with at all, because this issue can never be made final. We will not deal with it at all." At least one study puts the percentage of Jordanians of Palestinian origin at 37 per cent but many commentators put the figure at 50 per cent while others suggest it may be as high as 70 per cent. Jordan has absorbed Palestinian refugees and displaced persons from the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967, as well as tens of thousands of Jordanian returnees to the Kingdom, presumed by many to be mostly

of Palestinian origin, following the 1990-91 Gulf crisis. In two publications disclosing the 1994 census results, there is mention of neither displaced persons nor refugees, although the questionnaire distributed in 1994 made thorough inquiry into the origin of household members. The questionnaire asked residents if they were: Refugees of 1948? Displaced persons of 1967? Refugees then displaced? From the Gaza Strip? or a returnee due to the Gulf crisis? It also asked for date and place of birth of the occupants, their parents and grandparents' length of residency in present location and last place of

residency. As to the issue of displaced people, Dr. Alawin said: "The general public has a definition and the political establishment has its own definition and we found that categorising these statistics will only add to the confusion." According to the census results, 92.4 per cent of Jordan's four million plus population are Jordanian and 7.6 are non-Jordanian. Dr. Alawin said that Jordanians were classified as those who hold Jordanian passports, including two- and five-year passport holders. As of December 1994, returnees from the Gulf numbered 216,133, constituting

5.2 per cent of the current population. The majority (86.8 per cent) returned from Kuwait, followed by 6.9 per cent from Saudi Arabia. The census has been criticised by some in the press and public as being politically motivated, categorising the population in terms of Jordanians and Palestinians, but officials have denied this since the outset of the census campaign. They have maintained that the 1994 census, the first since 1979, was necessary to measure trends in population growth, especially when it occurs drastically, over short periods of time as it has been the case in Jordan (See related story on page 3 and page 12).

## ROYAL JORDANIAN

### Announcement

Royal Jordanian has the pleasure to announce the introduction of a new service the "Advance Boarding Pass" at its Intercon. Housing Bank and Abdali offices. It is also available at its offices in Zarka and Irbid.

This "ABP" service allows RJ passengers to receive their Boarding Passes, seat assignments and pay their Airport Tax at RJ offices within (24) hours and until (3) hours prior to departure time.

This service applies to the following destinations: New York, Chicago, London, Berlin, Frankfurt and Amsterdam.



## White House chides Qadhafi's U.S. election plan

WASHINGTON (R) — The White House on Friday said plans by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi to spend \$1 billion to influence minorities in the U.S. elections was a bid by him to "worm his way" back into the world stage.

The official Libyan news agency JANA reported that Colonel Qadhafi met with American black Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan this week and said they agreed to mobilise "oppressed... blacks, Arabs, Muslims and Red Indians" to influence the outcome of this year's U.S. elections and foreign policy.

White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry brushed aside Col. Qadhafi's plans, saying the money would be better spent doing "something about the miserable conditions that his people face."

"Qadhafi has tried various schemes to evade his responsibilities in the international community," Mr. McCurry told reporters, renewing demands that Libya turn over two suspects sought in the 1983 bombing of a Pan Am jetliner over Scotland that killed 270 people.

"In large measure a lot of this is about Qadhafi trying to worm his way back into the graces of the world after harbouring two terrorist suspects for far too long," Mr. McCurry said.

The Libyan leader, whose 27-year grip in power has been marked by frequent clashes with the United States, vowed to spend up to \$1 billion to help set up a lobbying force.

"Given his judgment on matters and the skill he has demonstrated, I doubt that he would find that money well spent," Mr. McCurry said. "It would be better for him to use that money to... do something about the miserable conditions that his people face as a result of his leadership."

The United States accuses Libya of "sponsoring terrorism" and wants to toughen existing U.N. sanctions imposed in 1992 for its failure to hand over for trial in the United States or Britain two Libyan suspects in the Pan Am bombing.

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said on Friday he was surprised to have seen no sign that Mr. Farrakhan raised the bombing at his meeting with Col. Qadhafi.

"I just think as a citizen that when prominent Americans talk to Muammar Qadhafi, who is a criminal, that they ought to talk about Pan Am 103, and I didn't see any talk about Pan Am 103 in the public description of those events," Mr. Burns said.

"Maybe he did (raise the issue), and maybe we'll be very happy when he comes back to hear that he raised it, but I didn't hear it in all that happy talk about Tripoli the other day," he told reporters later. "I think that's very, very unfortunate."

## Israel expects ties with Indonesia, Malaysia soon

NEW DELHI (R) — Israeli Finance Minister Abraham Shohat, winding up a tour of Asian countries, has said he expected formal relations between Israel and Indonesia and Malaysia soon.

Mr. Shohat linked relations with the two mainly Muslim members of the Association of South East Asian Nations to the progress of peace talks with Syria, which he expected to yield positive results soon.

"I am sure if you move ahead with the peace process, and we are moving ahead with the peace process, very soon we shall have connections with Malaysia and Indonesia," Mr. Shohat told Reuters in the Indian capital.

"I believe Syria has strategically decided about making peace with Israel," Mr. Shohat said. "The question is the process. How long it will take? What will be the obstacles in the way of negotiations? But I believe that at the end of the day there will be a peace agreement between Syria and Israel."

Mr. Shohat's remarks evoked a positive response in Jakarta.

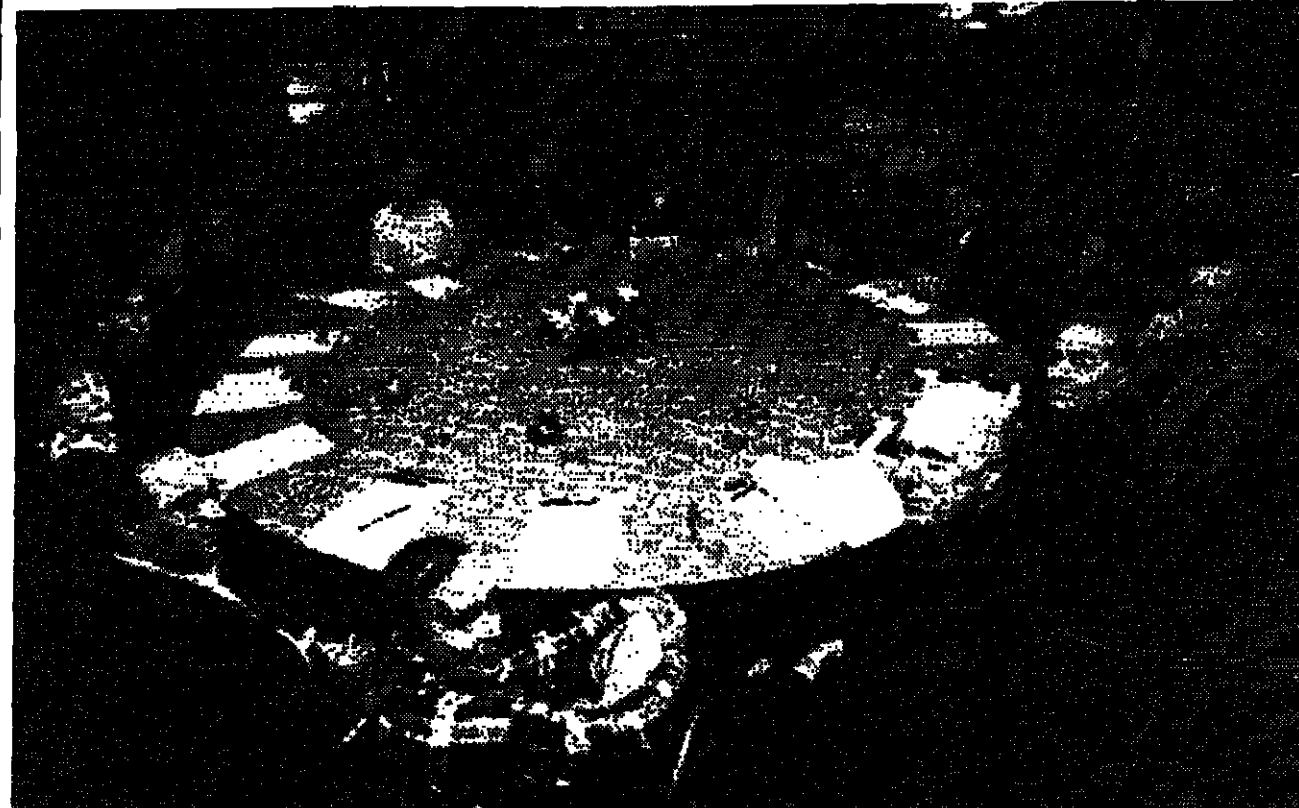
Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesman Ghaflar Fadyl told Reuters: "Responding to this hope, we have already believed that when problems in the Middle East are solved, Indonesia could have political ties with Israel."

Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim nation.

There was no immediate comment in Kuala Lumpur but Malaysia said on Jan. 13 it was normalising trade with Israel.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad said the decision was Malaysia's response to

States, vowed to spend up to \$1 billion to help set up a lobbying force.



PEACE TALKS: Participants in Syrian-Israeli talks gather around the conference table at the Wye Plantation in Maryland. They are (clockwise from bottom), starting with man in plaid shirt: Mark Parris of the U.S., Riad Daoudi of Syria, Toni Verstandig of the U.S., Aaron Miller of the U.S., Hassan Khalil of Syria, Ibrahim Mohammad Al Umar of Syria, translator Gamal Helal of the U.S., Danny Yetom of Israel, Walid Al Moullem of Syria, Warren Christopher of the U.S., Uri Savir of Israel, Dennis Ross of the U.S., Yoel Singer of Israel, Uzi Dayan of Israel, Itamar Rabinovich of Israel, Mikhail Wehbe of Syria, and Daniel W. Christman of the U.S. (Reuters photo)

## Mideast peace is a priority for U.S.

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Peace in the Middle East "is a foreign policy priority of the United States from President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher on down. We will be there... offering encouragement, helping overcome difficulties and lending our support," Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Robert Pelletreau told members of the Women's National Democratic Club Thursday.

Although he admitted the emerging peace "is a complicated pattern (and) much work needs to be done to consolidate recent gains," the assistant secretary reported that "new relationships are unfolding at different rates... (and) the trend is slowly and steadily forward."

"There have been serious obstacles along the way by extremists on both sides attempting to derail the process," Mr. Pelletreau said.

"Sometimes they have succeeded in halting the negotiations for a short period, but a way has always been found to strengthen the overall process."

He added that a comprehensive peace in the region should include an agreement between the governments of Syria and Israel. Mr. Pelletreau reported that "there are preparations going on for that possibility. We will support those preparations at the right time as they move forward."

According to Mr. Pelletreau, several significant steps toward Middle East peace have occurred during the past few weeks.

They include:

- The signing by Jordan and Israel of the last bilateral agreement called for in their 15-month-old peace treaty, thus opening new opportunities for trade and interaction.
- A visit by King Hussein to Tel Aviv to dedicate the new wing of a hospital there in the name of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.
- A visit to Egypt by Israel's energy minister to discuss plans to build a natural gas pipeline from Egypt to Israel and to establish electronic links between the two countries.
- Following a meeting with Secretary of State Christopher last month, the announcement by the foreign ministers of Tunisia and Israel that they would open interest sections in each other's country in April.
- A visit by Israeli foreign minister to Morocco on his way to peace talks in the U.S. to attend the first-ever Israeli cultural meeting in Casablanca.
- A resumption of negotiations at the Wye Plantation Conference Centre in Maryland by Syrian and Israeli

military experts on the status of Golan Heights.

A high Palestinian turnout Jan. 20 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip where voters elected Yasser Arafat president and an 88-seat legislative council.

When asked about King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, Mr. Pelletreau responded that over the past month, the Saudi government has "pulled together" to begin a transitional process (which) "appears to be operating smoothly in a way that will permit King Fahd's full return to power or a transition."

Mr. Pelletreau also said that the U.S. is "concerned by the unrest in Bahrain" which, he described as "urged on and promoted by Iran." He reported that the government of Bahrain is dealing with the situation "in a responsible way that deserves our support."

## Morocco loses outspoken human rights minister

RABAT (R) — Mohammad Ziyane, the outspoken and combative Moroccan cabinet member who resigned on Thursday, took on both the government and the opposition during his year as human rights minister.

Mr. Ziyane, a successful lawyer before his appointment in the centre-right government of Abdul Latif Filali, had been expecting a call from King Hassan after he let off a tirade against the government last week.

Mr. Ziyane, already in deep water for his public spats in parliament with members of the opposition, took a gamble in aiming his attacks directly against the Interior Ministry, headed by the powerful Driss Basri.

In a statement to the press, which at the time he admitted could end his brief career in politics, Mr. Ziyane made a virulent attack against the ministry's tactics against smugglers.

He argued that the arrest of more than 200 people in raids across the country was an abuse of power and said the law had been ignored in what he called a policy of "collective lynching."

On Thursday Mr. Ziyane, a portly 53-year-old and Morocco's most colourful politician, asked to be relieved of his job.

The king asked Justice Minister Abdul Rahman Amal to take over Mr. Ziyane's duties. It was not known if the position of human rights minister, created in 1993, would be retained.

"The minister of justice taking over human rights. It's amazing," a Western diplomat said.

Mr. Ziyane, who by Friday morning had emptied his desk at the ministry, was last year advised by the king to take a "vacation" until a quarrel with the opposition died down.

The government was forced to apologise to the opposition after Mr. Ziyane stormed out of parliament when left-wing deputies refused to let him reply to questions about Islamist leader Abdul Salam Yassine, who is under house arrest.

The opposition, particularly the old-guard Istiqlal Party, has for some time been gunning for Mr. Ziyane, who they never forgave for representing the government in a celebrated legal battle against a radical trade union leader four years ago.

It became a habit for the 125 opposition members to walk out of parliament whenever Mr. Ziyane rose to speak.

Mr. Ziyane claimed victory — later to prove premature — when Mr. Yassine, leader of the banned Al Adl Wal Ihsane (Justice and Charity) movement, was allowed to have visitors and then freed for a few hours to preach at a mosque.

Mr. Basri later told parliament that Mr. Yassine would remain under "police protection" for his own safety.

At his last cabinet meeting on Tuesday, Mr. Ziyane looked glum and avoided the cameras.

Mr. Ziyane, whose mother is Spanish and who speaks fluent French, Spanish and Italian as well as Arabic, became one of the most recognised ministers in Morocco and was rarely out of the news.

Articulate and known to like the good life, he was often seen at embassy receptions as he lobbied to improve Morocco's tarnished human rights image abroad.

In recent months, he flung open prison doors and allowed journalists into some of Morocco's most notorious jails.

Last December, he invited Amnesty International, the London-based human rights group that has often criticised Morocco's human rights record, to a seminar in Rabat.

Mr. Ziyane's main legacy will be the programme he devised with Amnesty and the minister of education to teach human rights in schools.

## Women want bigger stake in autonomy

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Palestinian women activists said on Friday they were pleased with a high female turnout for last week's general elections but demanded legislation to help women gain greater parliamentary representation.

Palestinians on Jan. 20 elected Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat president of an interim government and chose 88 members, including five women, to sit on the legislative council.

"Having five women there (in the council) is important, having men with a programme committed to women's issues is a plus. That gives us sufficient ammunition to start with," Hasan Ashrawi, who won a seat on the legislative council, told an East Jerusalem news conference.

She listed the most pressing needs for Palestinian women as legislation to mandate women's education to prevent early marriage and to curb domestic violence.

One activist, Ghada Zughayer, said Mr. Arafat had resisted demands to give women's issues priority.

"The response was not positive at all by Mr. Yasser Arafat. He simply and straightforwardly said that he had enough attacks by Muslim fundamentalists."

The Women's Affairs Technical Committee and the Jerusalem Centre for Women said in a statement distributed at the news conference that 42 per cent of voters at Saturday's elections were women. Some 52 per cent of registered voters are women.

Only 28 of the 676 candidates for the Palestinian legislative council were women.

The two groups blamed the Palestinian multi-district electoral system for the small number of women elected to the council. They said that women ran in only nine of the 16 electoral districts.

"The nature of the electoral system... decreased the chances of women succeeding in the candidacy process," the statement said.

Zahira Kamal, who ran for a council seat in Jerusalem but lost, said the elections showed the need to establish a quota for women on the council.

"As women who were suppressed for centuries, we have to take affirmative action to alleviate the status of women and that's why I am talking about a quota for women," Ms. Kamal said.

## German prosecutors probe Iranian spy chief

BONN (R) — German prosecutors are investigating possible links between Iran's intelligence minister and the killing of four exiled Kurds in an inquiry that could lead to a warrant for his arrest, a spokesman said on Friday.

Rolf Hannich, spokesman for the federal prosecutors' office, said that the investigation of Ali Fallahian was prompted by allegations that Tehran had ordered five suspected Iranian agents to kill Kurdish activists in Berlin in 1992.

The five are now on trial for murder.

"The (trial's) evidence indicates that it was a deed steered by an intelligence agency. That's why we launched an investigation into the Iranian intelligence minister in November," Mr. Hannich told Reuters.

Asked whether prosecutors would issue a warrant for Mr. Fallahian's arrest, Mr. Hannich said: "That has yet to be decided, I cannot say at present."

Tehran has denied allegations that Mr. Fallahian had masterminded the assassinations.

An official from Germany's counter-intelligence agency testified in court on Thursday that Iran's Intelligence Ministry had masterminded the attack by sending agents to Germany to help carry out the gangland-style killings.

Klaus Gruenewald, a senior official from the federal office for protection of the constitution (BfV) did not, however, mention Mr. Fallahian by name.

Bilateral relations are already strained. Iran protested formally to Bonn on Thursday over a German official's remarks that Tehran had tried to obtain nuclear materials illegally.

Bonn, which maintains what it calls a "critical dialogue" with Iran, distanced itself from Tehran in November when parliament voted to exclude Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati from a conference in Bonn.

It said it was inappropriate to host him after Tehran praised Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination.

The five defendants in the Berlin trial are charged with murdering three leaders of the Iranian Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK-I) and their translator.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Iraq has rebuilt air force — commander

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq said Saturday it had completely rebuilt its air force after it was devastated in the 1991 Gulf war. "We have managed to rebuild what was destroyed and restore the capacity of our air force so it can guarantee the defence of our country," air force commander Khaldoun Khattab told the press. "Our technicians have shown great skill in getting the planes going again."

Mr. Khattab said in an interview marking the fifth anniversary of the Gulf war against a U.S.-led multinational coalition. Iraq announced last year a campaign to resurrect its air force under the supervision of President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday. According to the International Institute of Strategic Studies in London, the Iraqi army lost half of its equipment when it was driven out of Kuwait in the January-February 1991 war. But it has rebuilt a "considerable" amount, the institute said, reporting last October that the Iraqi air force had six bombers, 130 fighters capable of air-to-surface combat and 180 fighters for aerial combat.

### 'Collaborator' shot on West Bank

JENIN (AFP) — A Palestinian "collaborator" who took refuge in Israel through fear of revenge attacks was shot and wounded when he returned to the West Bank to visit relatives, witnesses said Saturday. Unidentified gunmen shot the man in the leg in a village near Jenin late Friday, they said. He was taken to an Israeli hospital. After collaborating with Israeli occupying forces on the West Bank, the man took Israeli nationality and went to live in the Jewish state.

### Pupils torch school fearing exams

CAIRO (AFP) — Two pupils set fire to their school to burn mid-term exam papers because they feared they had failed the tests, the government daily Al Akhbar said Saturday. Several of the school buildings at Tala in the Nile Delta were set alight including the room where the papers were stored. The two were arrested and confessed.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 771111-14

### PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 The Flamingoes  
14:30 Disney Master Detective  
15:00 Family Playhouse  
15:30 Islamic History in Jordan  
16:00 Voyagers  
17:00  
17:30 Children's Programme — Ordy  
17:15 Cupido  
17:30  
17:30 Les Compagnons de L'Adventure  
18:00 Magazine — Envy Spout  
19:00 News in French  
19:15  
19:15 Magazine — Sports Et Musique  
19:30 News Headlines  
19:45  
20:00 Are You Being Served  
20:05 Doc. — Oriental Rug  
20:25 Hawaii Five-0 (drama)  
21:10 Cinema, Cinema  
21:50  
22:00 Women and the World  
22:00 News in English  
22:15 Counterstrike  
22:15 The American Chart Show  
22:59 Series — Stay Lucky

### PRAYER TIMES

05:08 Fajr  
06:28 Sunrise (Dhuhr) Doha  
11:45 Dhuhr  
13:44 Asr  
17:09 Maghreb  
18:29 Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Sweilheh, Tel. 810740  
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Terresanta Church Tel. 625264  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541  
Anglican Church Tel. 852826  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331  
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751  
Armenian International Church Tel. 655256  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328  
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457  
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 658432  
Church of Nazareth Tel. 678491  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology  
A cold air mass will affect the Kingdom today, so temperatures are expected to drop with dew-building up at different altitudes.

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

There will be a chance for scattered showers particularly in the northern areas and windy becoming southerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, moderate weather conditions will prevail with winds northerly active and seas choppy.

Min./Max. temp.  
Amman ..... 5 / 13  
Aqaba ..... 11 / 21  
Dessat ..... 4 / 10  
Jordan Valley ..... 10 / 20

Yesterday's high temperatures:  
Amman 16, Aqaba 21 Humidity readings: Amman 75 per cent, Aqaba 52 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY  
AMMAN:  
Dr. Jihad Sammour ..... 755255  
Dr. Nidal Al Dalalah ..... 692625  
Dr. Yehya Abdul Rahim ..... 736072  
Dr. Bahjat Bader ..... 832642  
Firo Pharmacy ..... 649112  
Ferdous Pharmacy ..... 778336  
Al Asema pharmacy ..... 637055

Naioukh pharmacy ..... 825672  
Al Salam pharmacy ..... 636730  
Yacoub pharmacy ..... 644945  
Shimoun pharmacy ..... 637660  
Naioukh pharmacy ..... 625672  
Najih pharmacy ..... 847632

IRBID:  
Dr. Ahmad Qutu ..... 281741  
Alquds pharmacy ..... (—)

ZARQA:  
Dr. Fahd Abdul Salam ..... 985459  
Khulidi pharmacy ..... 985417

EMERGENCIES  
Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department 661111  
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue ..... 630241  
Fire Brigade ..... 617101  
Blood Bank ..... 778121  
Highway Police ..... 843402  
Traffic Police ..... 696380  
Public Security Department ..... 63021  
Hotel Complaints ..... 646804  
Water and Sewerage Complaints ..... 661176  
Amman Municipality ..... 897467  
Complaints ..... 787111  
Telephone Information

(directory assistance) ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 910230  
Central Amman Telephone Repair ..... 623101  
Abdull Telephone Repair ..... 623101  
Radio Jordan ..... 773111  
Water Authority ..... 680180  
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company ..... 636381  
RJ Flight Information ..... 08-53280  
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53280

HOSPITALS  
AMMAN:  
Hussein Medical Centre 81381332  
Khulidi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816  
Aklil Maternity, J. Amn. 642412  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642362  
Maha J. Amn ..... 636121  
Palestine, Shmoun ..... 67071  
Shmoun Hospital ..... 669131  
University Hospital ..... 648454  
Al-Musharraf Hospital ..... 6672274  
The Islamic, Abdull ..... 66612737  
Al-Ahli, Abdull ..... 661646  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen ..... 7771013  
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh ..... 7751126  
Army, Marka ..... 8916115  
Queen Alia Hospital ..... 60224050  
Amal Hospital ..... 607155

ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 109983323  
Zarqa National Hospital ..... 109983323  
Ibn Sina Hospital ..... 109983323  
Al Hikam Modern Hospital 10999400  
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ..... 863199  
IBBID:  
Prince-Bazma Hospital ..... 10275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital 1027275  
Im Al-Nahes Hospital 102127100  
AQABA:  
Prince Haya Hospital 10314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER  
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 08553248. S. where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
05:30 ..... Bangkok (RJ)  
06:00 ..... Jeddah (add) (RJ)

DEPARTURES  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
05:00 ..... Aqaba (RJ)  
06:15 ..... Beirut (RJ)  
06:30 ..... Frankfurt (RJ)  
11:00 ..... Vienna (RJ)  
11:15 ..... Rome (RJ)  
11:25 ..... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)  
10:30 ..... Sania (Y)  
12:30 ..... Bahrain (GF)  
14:00 ..... Doha (O)  
14:30 ..... Moscow (SU)  
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Queen I  
1996

Ministry a  
Al Sam





Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday launches the United Nations Children's Fund "State of the World's Children 1996" report at Al Ma'wa Palace in a meeting attended by UNICEF senior officials (Petra photo)

## Queen launches UNICEF's 1996 children's report

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday launched the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) "State of the World's Children 1996" report at Al Ma'wa Palace, a Royal Court statement said.

Queen Noor praised the report's anti-war agenda, adding that she had publicly expressed her concern at the impact of war on children at the 1990 World Summit for Children, which had coincided with the buildup of conflict in the region, the statement said.

She emphasised the need to re-direct military resources for development, especially in the Arab World which has lost 120,000 children to conflict in the past decade, it said.

According to the statement, UNICEF's Area Representative, Doris Alopaus-Stahl expressed her sincere appreciation of Queen Noor's "tireless work throughout the year for the benefit of the children of the world" and noted that Jordan has achieved most of its mid-decade targets to reduce mortality, disease, malnutrition and illiteracy by the year 2000.

She added that the National Task Force for Children will be "central in keeping up this momentum as part of the child rights promotion in Jordan," the statement said.

"The State of the World's Children 1996" highlights two basic themes: the terri-

ble toll wars and conflicts are taking on children and UNICEF's achievements in the past 50 years.

According to the report, more than two million children have been killed, 4-5 million disabled, 12 million homeless, one million orphaned and 10 million psychologically traumatised in the past decade.

The report argues that respect for children and commitment to their welfare are key to humanitarian and political progress and sets out an agenda for action.

The anti-war agenda includes banning the production, use and sale of landmines, the systematic report of war crimes against women and children, raising the age at which children can be conscripted into armed forces, monitoring the effects of economic sanctions on children and promoting the principle of "children as zones of peace."

UNICEF, which was established in 1946 to help children in countries devastated by World War II, has championed the defence of children against cruelty, injustice and exploitation, the statement said.

In cooperation with its international development partners, it has led mass immunisation campaigns against diseases, such as polio, tuberculosis and measles, advocated the integration of children's needs within national development plans as well as the protection and pro-

motion of children's rights in accordance with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Jordan, which joined UNICEF's child survival revolution in 1980, has achieved Universal Child Immunisation (90 per cent immunisation against six killer diseases), guaranteed access to safe water to 97 per cent of its population, provided primary education to 98 per cent of its children, adopted legislation to iodise all salt for human consumption and implemented a national policy for breastfeeding, the statement said.

In the area of child rights, Jordan has established the National Task Force for Children, which will monitor the condition and status of children in accordance with the Arab and International Convention on the Rights of the Child and the National Plan of Action for Children, as is in the process of drafting the country's first "Childhood Act."

Advisor to the Queen In'am Mufti, UNICEF's programme officer Ayman Abu Laban, Regional External Relations Officer Tuma Hazou and Information Assistant Bassam Bataineh attended the launching ceremony, according to the statement.

Later, Queen Noor held an iftar for members of the Royal family and wives of government officials, the statement said.

## Survey: 1.3 per cent of population disabled

By Lola Keilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A survey carried out on 66,921 families shows that 1.3 per cent of the Jordanian population suffer from one form of disability or another.

The survey, which accompanied the 1994 national census, shows that 4,694 individuals in the Kingdom out of the 66,921 surveyed families were disabled, which is seven handicapped Jordanians for every 100 families. The average Jordanian family has six members, according to the 1994 census.

The census team carried a special questionnaire to one out of 10 families to find out the number of disabled, illiteracy rate, emigration and fertility rate, Director General of the Statistics Department Abdul Hadi Alawin told the Jordan Times.

According to survey findings, the physically disabled accounted for 28 per cent of the total number of the handicapped, i.e. one fourth of the disabilities were physical ones. The survey found that one third of the physically handicapped were living in Mafrqa, Ajloun, Madaba and Jarash.

It also showed that hearing and speaking disabilities affected 16 per cent of the total number of handicapped individuals, with the majority of them residing in Madaba and Balqa.

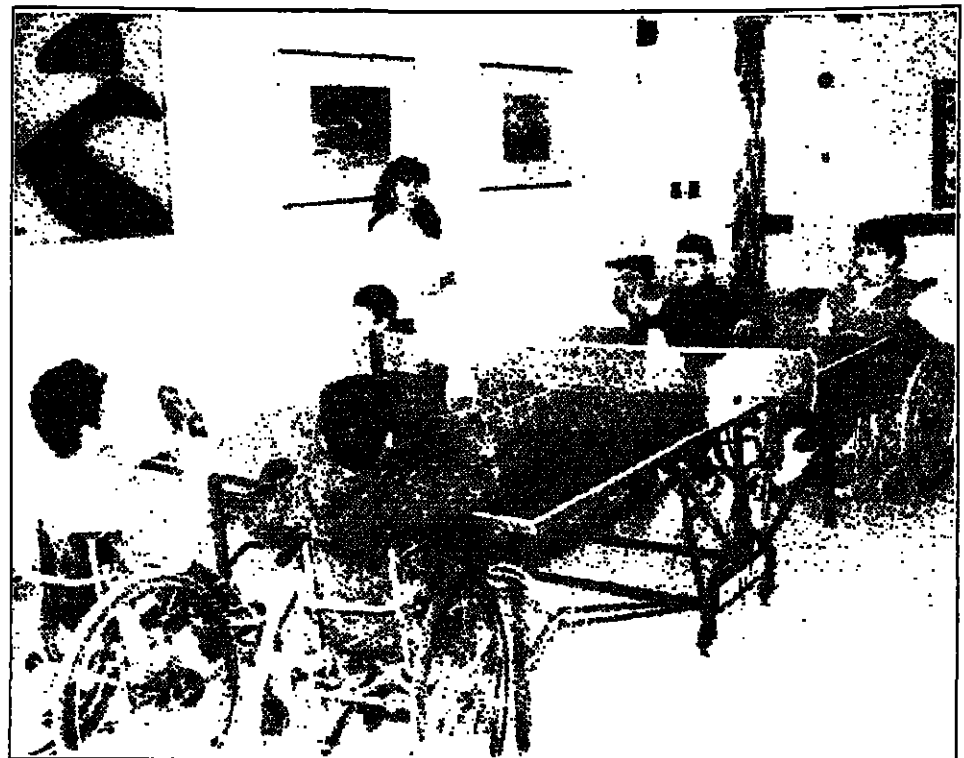
All the other types of disabilities range between 12 to 12.8 per cent of the total number of handicapped individuals.

Individuals with mental disabilities accounted for 20.6 per cent of the total number, with 8.4 per cent of them suffering from cerebral palsy, the study said.

The highest rate of individuals with mental disabilities (18 per cent) was found in Tafila, compared to 11.4 per cent in Irbid and Mafrqa.

The blind, account for 12 per cent of those with disabilities. The survey found that most of the blind live in Aqaba and that they constituted 23.3 per cent of all the disabled persons in the governorate.

According to the study, 12.8 per cent of the disabled suffer from chronic illnesses. The majority, it said, were found in Balqa.



File photo showing disabled children at the Al Hussein Club for the Physically Handicapped which Saturday started a nationwide fund-raising campaign (Petra photo)

## Princess Majda announces start of fund-raising campaign for handicapped

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Majda Raad, president of the Al Hussein Society and Club for the Physically Handicapped, Saturday announced the launching of a nationwide campaign to raise donations for the club.

Addressing a press conference at the society's headquarters, Princess Majda said the donations are needed to create permanent premises for the club, cover expenses for handicapped sports activities, recruit and prepare handicapped sports teams and spread public awareness about the importance of sports for the physically

handicapped. She said sports help the handicapped and disabled to develop physically, socially and psychologically and help to develop talents and potential in these individuals to enable them to go about their lives and work with skill and efficiency.

She said it was a group of handicapped youths, who took part in sports activities over the past two years under the auspices of the Crown Prince Award that encouraged the establishment of the club.

Started last year, the club aims at helping physically handicapped youths participate in sports activities

and drawing public attention to the capabilities of these youth, thus encouraging the public to accept them as useful and productive members of society, Princess Majda added.

The permanent centre, she added, will include among other things an indoor sports hall. She said the society plans to provide transportation to and from the club through the expected donations.

The society, according to Princess Majda, currently offers physiotherapy and vocational training to 150 handicapped youths who are unable to attend regular schools.

## UNWRA panel says news report inaccurate Agency employees call allowance scale 'unfair'

By Ghaila Ahul  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) employees Saturday said a headline about salary increases for UNRWA staff published in an Arabic daily on Saturday was "inaccurate and misleading."

The headline said "1500 UNRWA employees in Jordan benefited from the salary raises which ranged from 2.76 per cent to 8 per cent."

A representative of an UNRWA employees committee told the Jordan Times that the report itself was erroneous, adding that the agency only included level one employees in its salary increases and adjust-

ed a salary scale for some doctors. The source, who preferred anonymity, reiterated Jordanian employees' disappointment that the agency gave their UNRWA colleagues in Syria a 15 per cent pay raise, workers in Lebanon five per cent, and West Bank and Gaza workers an eight per cent raise, and excluded them from the wage hikes.

He described this exclusion as "political punishment the agency inflicted on its employees in Jordan."

The source said the agency attempted to conduct a survey on its employees in Jordan and used the results to convince its workers that their salaries were on par with those of Jordanian govern-

ment workers. He said UNRWA's method of establishing equanimity was "unfair." He said the survey omitted the fringe benefits government employees in Jordan are entitled to, such as health insurance and loans. Therefore, he said, the comparison between government pay-scales plus benefits and those of UNRWA, is incomplete.

The source cited the 25 per cent professional allowance Jordanian teachers received almost two years ago, urging the agency to take similar steps towards its teachers.

He told the Jordan Times that UNRWA employees in Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza, rejected the agency's attempt to conduct a similar survey in their

areas and staged a general strike, which pressured the agency to meet their demands.

He added that Jordanian UNRWA committee representatives will take similar steps and stage a general strike which he said will harm all UNRWA services in Jordan, especially its 201 schools that provide education for almost 150,000 students.

Asked if the new UNRWA Commissioner-General Peter Hansen, who was appointed Jan. 20, has made any promises to employees in Jordan, the source said that UNRWA committees did not have the opportunity to meet with him yet, but they met with the agency's human resource manager, Joseph Akar, and UNRWA Affairs

Coordinator Dennis Brown and reiterated their demands.

But, he added, the meeting changed nothing. "We are planning to send a letter to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and explain what has been going on in the agency, and hopefully we will have the opportunity to arrange a meeting with him," the source said.

UNRWA employees have taken a series of measures against the agency, demanding better health, social and educational services as well as salary increases.

UNRWA in Jordan provides services for at least 1,300,000 registered Palestinian refugees.

## Ministry aims to improve Khirbet Al Samra plant performance

ZARQA (Petra) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irshaidat Saturday said his Ministry is currently implementing long- and short-term expansion and improvement projects at Khirbet Al Samra waste water treatment plant near Zarqa in order to cope with the huge influx of waste water pouring into the plant and to eliminate the stench stemming from the plant's ponds.

Speaking during an inspection visit to the plant in the company of parliament members from the Zarqa governorate as well as heads of municipalities of Zarqa, Hashimiyeh and Sukhneh towns, Dr. Irshaidat said the ministry's long-term plans provide for establishing an advanced treatment plant at

an estimated cost of JD 50 million to work along side the existing one to cope with the increase in the amount of effluence.

He said treated water running out of the new plant would be more suitable for agricultural uses and would carry a minimum bad smell.

Furthermore, Dr. Irshaidat said the ministry has made plans for linking Zarqa with the plant through a close metal pipeline so as to prevent the bad smell from spreading around, adding that the pipeline which is expected to be laid this year will cost JD 50 million.

Referring to other projects, the minister said that the ministry has allocated sufficient funds for building a sewerage network in Al

Hashimiyeh town, noting that work in the project is expected to start this year.

According to official sources, treated water from the plant is used to irrigate about 10,000 dunums of land, mostly planted with forest and olive trees.

The sources said that the plant, which was built in 1985 to receive 68,000 cubic metres of effluence daily, is now dealing with 170,000 cubic metres daily and for this reason expansion was necessary.

Referring to the short-term — or emergency — plan, the minister said that this is being implemented by a U.S. firm at a cost of \$10.6 million which was provided as a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

## 'Royal Wings plans to start domestic flights by Feb. 10'

AMMAN (Petra) — Royal Wings, the newly established Jordanian airline company, plans to start domestic flights before Feb. 10, the company's General Manager Ahd Quntar announced Saturday.

The commercial airline took delivery of the first of two Canadian-made Bombardier Dash 8-300 aircraft and is preparing it for its initial route between Amman (Marka Airport) and Aqaba, said Mr. Quntar.

He said the airline will operate two daily flights between the capital and the port city with departures from Amman at 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. and from Aqaba to Amman from 8:40 a.m. and 9:40 p.m.

Royal Wings is 99 per cent owned by the national carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ), and one per cent by the Employees' Savings Fund of RJ.

Future plan for Royal Wings include operating regional flights to Damascus, Beirut, Alexandria, Tel

Aviv, Larnaka, Ghardaqa and Sharm al Sheikh after the airline takes delivery of the second aircraft, Mr. Quntar said.

He said that expansion of operations will depend on agreements concluded with other countries in the region.

According to Mr. Quntar, the new airline was established to meet increasing demand in the regional tourism sector, particularly since the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

## Hot-line operators start training course

By Lola Keilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) Saturday started a two-week training course for women counsellors operating the union's domestic violence hot-line on ways to deal with calls from troubled individuals.

Although JWU drew plans for the course months ago, it was not until it received a £25,000 British government grant that it could actually proceed with the project, said Afaf Jaber, director of the hot-line project.

The hot-line, which was initiated last June, has been operated by only one qualified individual, lawyer and former director of the project, Sawwan Ishaq. The lack of funds prevented the union from training others, Ms. Ishaq said.

She said that because not all problems raised during the hot-line calls were legal issues, anyone available at the union could provide immediate counselling.

Most of the phone calls have been about residency problems and passports, as well as violence against women and children, Ms. Jaber said.

With the training project, four union employees and 26 volunteers will learn communication skills, how to provide psychological support over the telephone and how to counter domestic violence.

Ms. Jaber, the new director of the programme, told the Jordan Times that lawyers, psychologists and sociologists will attend the course.

Ms. Jaber said the hot line also welcomes calls from men.

"Violence is not limited to physical forms," she said. "It can also be manifested in psychological abuse and indirect domination," Ms. Jaber said.

The British embassy sponsorship of the project is in line with its programme to fund projects related to women in development.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### PLAYS

- \* "Between Two Jaws," at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- \* "Ramadan Supermarket" (in Arabic) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

### CONCERT

- \* Musical performance by Mughirah at the

Phoenix Gallery, Gardens Street at 8:30 p.m.

### EXHIBITIONS

- \* Photography and paintings of railways and trains at Goethe-Institut (until Jan. 31).
- \* Paintmaking and paintings by Jordanian artist Yasser Dweik at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Luweibdeh. Also displaying paintings and sculptures by

contemporary artists (until Feb. 18).

- \* Contemporary and Traditional Jewellery at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre, Shmeisani (Tel. 699141) (until Jan. 31).

- \* Plastic (abstract) art exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina (until Feb. 6).

- \* Paintings by artist Raphael Chabrol at the French Cultural Centre (until Jan. 31).



# U.S. Senate ratifies START II

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The U.S. Senate ratified the START II treaty Friday, only hours after President Bill Clinton expressed the hope to Russia's President Boris Yeltsin that the Russian parliament would follow suit.

The treaty slashing the nuclear arsenals of the two superpowers was ratified by an overwhelming 87-4 vote more than three years after it was signed in Moscow by Mr. Yeltsin and President George Bush.

Mr. Clinton hailed the vote at a gathering of Hispanic publishers.

"Let me tell you what that means, that means that when the Russians follow suit, when START II is ratified, we would have reduced nuclear weapons two thirds below the cold war highs."

Mr. Yeltsin told Mr.

Clinton in a telephone conversation earlier in the day he would do everything possible to get the parliament to ratify the treaty before their summit on nuclear security April 19-20 in Moscow, White House spokesman Michael McCurry said.

In his State of the Union address Tuesday, Mr. Clinton called on the Senate to ratify START II and, in his conversation with Mr. Yeltsin, expressed hope that the Russian parliament would follow suit.

The treaty called for both sides to slash their long-range nuclear arsenals by about a third within a decade, and to eliminate land-based multiple warhead missiles.

The treaty was negotiated in six months by the Bush administration in the flush of good feeling that fol-

lowed the end of the cold war.

But both Russia and the United States have experienced shifts to the right with the Communists winning parliamentary elections in December and conservative Republicans now dominate both houses of the U.S. Congress.

The START II ratification was voted moments after the Senate approved a U.S. defence budget that had been held up largely over a proposed anti-missile defence system that the administration feared would jeopardise the START agreements with Russia.

The administration successfully argued that the anti-missile defences proposed by the Republicans would have violated the 1972 anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty. The proposal was amended in the defence

spending bill passed Friday.

"We have taken a major step here today in voting for ratification and we can only hope that the Russian Duma will do the same," said Senator Carl Levin, a Democrat from Michigan instrumental in bringing the treaty to a vote.

Senator Jesse Helms, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, argued that the missile defence system was intended to complement the reductions in the U.S. nuclear arsenal envisions by START II.

"Today we are being asked to consent to ratification of the START II treaty when this country has suffered a massive blow to its plans to defend its citizens against nuclear weapons," he said.

## Yeltsin stresses opposition to NATO's eastward expansion

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin stressed Russia's opposition to expansion of the Western military alliance NATO in a meeting here Saturday with German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel.

"Our positions coincide on almost everything with those of Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Germany, except perhaps on the question of NATO," Mr. Yeltsin was quoted as saying by Interfax News Agency.

Mr. Yeltsin said Germany

could save tens of millions of dollars by backing Russia in opposing the plans to expand NATO membership to include East European countries that used to be dominated by the Soviet Union.

"If we could have you as partners on the question of not expanding NATO, it would be great and you would not have to throw tens of millions of dollars at this problem," Mr. Yeltsin was quoted as saying by Interfax.

Earlier, Mr. Yeltsin said that he and his U.S. counterpart Bill Clinton held a "very lively" telephone conversation on the NATO question.

The conversation, which took place Friday on Mr. Clinton's initiative, lasted 40 minutes and Mr. Clinton promised to carefully consider Russian objections, Interfax said.

Mr. Yeltsin said he was sending Washington a "serious message" on the matter.

## Clinton, Yeltsin discuss Bosnia, Chechnya by phone

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton sought and received assurances that Russian reforms will continue during a telephone chat Friday with Russian President Boris Yeltsin that also touched on Bosnia and Chechnya, the White House said.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry described the 40-minute conversation, which Mr. Clinton initiated, as "very cordial" and said it was clear that Mr. Yeltsin is "fully back at work, in charge, and as he told Mr. Clinton, 'in good shape'."

Mr. McCurry said the two leaders discussed the direction of reform in Russia and Mr. Clinton welcomed Mr. Yeltsin's recent statements that Russia's commitment to reform is irreversible.

In a development that seemed to imply disenchantment with reform, Mr. Yeltsin announced Thursday that he had chosen a Soviet-school industrialist, Vladimir Kadannikov, to replace reformer Anatoly Chubais as deputy prime minister.

The departure of Mr. Chubais and Andrei Kozyrev's resignation as Russian foreign minister have raised concerns in Washington that Mr. Yeltsin is moving away from economic and political reform to currying favour with increasingly powerful Russian hardliners.

Mr. McCurry said Mr. Yeltsin had assured Mr. Clinton that "he was not only firmly committed to economic reform but also to a continuing strong U.S.-Russian partnership and relationship." The two leaders "did not discuss specifically any personnel changes" at the Kremlin, he told reporters.

U.S. officials understand that Mr. Yeltsin must cope with "a very complex political environment" and that "there will be twists and turns in the pathway toward reform," Mr. McCurry said.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Yeltsin discussed the violence between Russian troops and Chechen separatists and Mr. Yeltsin said he hoped the crisis could be resolved peacefully, the White House spokesman said.

Russia will conduct a presidential election in June but Mr. McCurry deflected the question with a wisecrack when asked if Mr. Yeltsin, who is widely expected to seek re-election, had told Mr. Clinton he will do so. Mr. Yeltsin "did not make a request to send (Clinton campaign adviser) James Carville to Moscow in the coming year," Mr. McCurry said.



The longer range version of India's medium-range Prithvi missile, capable of carrying nuclear warheads, on display during the Republic Day parade in New Delhi. It was successfully launched a day later and officials said the missile flew some 200 kilometres (Reuters photo)

## India launches medium-range missile

New Delhi (R) — India successfully tested a longer-range version of its medium-range Prithvi missile, capable of carrying nuclear warheads, Saturday.

"It was an excellent flight following a predicted trajectory in a textbook manner and the Prithvi impacted at the exact point (target)," a Defence Ministry spokesman in Delhi quoted a P.J. Abdul Kalam, the top Indian missile scientist, as saying.

"All the mission objectives were fully met," the spokesman said, adding the test flight of the missile, Prithvi-2, had touched the targeted spot 250 kilometres away in the medium range.

India had earlier tested a range of 150 kilometres.

The missile, made by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), is being developed for the Indian Air Force, the spokesman said.

The launch took place at Chandipur-on-Sea, the test site located 235 kilometres from Bhubaneswar, capital of the eastern coastal state of Orissa.

Officials said the targeted point was monitored by radars and a closely-sailing ship in

the Bay of Bengal.

"This flight heralds an important milestone for the Prithvi project of the nation's integrated guided missile development programme," the spokesman quoted a statement as saying.

The programme includes short, medium and long range missiles.

Officials said some 88 families located at the test site were moved to safer sites before the test launch.

U.S. officials say the introduction of sophisticated missiles like Prithvi in South Asia could increase tensions between India and Pakistan, which have fought three wars since they won independence from Britain in 1947.

Islamabad is critical of India's missile programmes. An earlier launch scheduled for Jan. 16 was postponed for unexplained reasons.

New Delhi and Islamabad say they are pursuing a nuclear energy programme for peaceful purposes. Both deny having a weapons programme, but often speak of a nuclear threat from each other.

## 1 dies, over 20 hurt in clashes over campaigning in Bangladesh

DHAKA (R) — A 14-year-old boy was killed by gunshots and more than 20 people were injured Saturday in clashes between government and opposition activists in southern Bangladesh during a visit by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, hospital sources said.

They said the unidentified boy was brought to the morgue from Kashipur on the outskirts of Khulna city shortly before the prime minister drove in as part of her election campaign.

"Over 20 people, including two policemen, were injured in battles at Kashipur between the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and opposition groups trying to disrupt her tour," one Khulna journalist told Reuters.

He said the prime minister had a brief recess in Khulna on her way to the nearby city of Bagerhat where she was expected to address a campaign rally and lay foundation of a small airstrip.

BNP workers lined up on roadsides and waved off their leader while police and paramilitary troops imposed tight security, witnesses said.

Mrs. Khaleda visited

Khulna and Bagerhat defying a day-long strike called by opposition parties, which largely paralysed the two cities, officials said.

The prime minister dropped plans for any public engagement in Khulna but kept her itinerary in Bagerhat unchanged.

Opposition and BNP activists chased each other through the streets of Khulna Saturday morning. Activists exploded homemade bombs at the Khulna office of the opposition Jatiya Party and damaged furniture and papers, witnesses said.

The Khulna office of Mrs. Hasina's Awami League also came under attack, one journalist told Reuters.

Main opposition parties, including the Awami, Jatiya and Jamaat-E-Islami, have said they will not take part in the election until Mrs. Khaleda hands over power to a neutral administration.

The prime minister has rejected the demands as unconstitutional and has vowed to go ahead with the election.

Mrs. Hasina Saturday asked overseas donors to stop giving aid to what she called Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's ille-

gal and corrupt government.

"Stop helping the illegal government and supporting its plan to perpetuate its rule through a farcical election," Mrs. Hasina said in an address to leaders of the Awami League.

Mrs. Hasina asked the leaders to organise a "people's boycott" of the Feb. 15 parliamentary elections at all costs.

"Often they (donors) shed crocodile tears for democracy in Bangladesh but keep offering assistance to its government which has showed utter disregard to democratic values and principles," she said.

It was the first time Mrs. Hasina had openly criticised the role of development aid donors, political analysts said. The South Asian country receives about \$2 billion in development aid each year.

Mrs. Hasina Saturday renewed her call for the army to return to the barracks after what she said was its failure to "retrieve big arms and arrest their powerful possessors."

The army joined a drive to seize illegal arms and explosives on Jan. 1 at the urging of the election commission.

## Actor becomes a victim of reel-life crime?

LOS ANGELES (R) — Actor Kevin Spacey, making a crime movie in his debut as a director, may be the victim of a real-life crime after 10 reels of film from his project were reported missing at Los Angeles International Airport. The actor, nominated for a best supporting actor Golden Globe Award for his role in Usual Suspects, offered a "substantial reward" for the return of the undeveloped film from Albino Alligator, starring Faye Dunaway, Matt Dillon and Gary Sinise. He declined to say how much he would pay but promised if the film was returned there would be "no police, no questions asked."

## Sniffer dog leaves tourist with no leg to stand on

AMSTERDAM (R) — A German tourist was left without a leg to stand on when sniffer dogs at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport detected half a kilogram of marijuana hidden in his artificial limb, ANP news agency said. Police said the 33-year-old man had arrived on a flight from Ghana with the drugs hidden inside his false left leg.

## Are hockey coaches like conductors? Ask Ottawa

OTTAWA (R) — Canada is paying to find out the difference between hockey coaches and symphony conductors, is studying a "foreign baseball team" and is building a canoe hall of fame in the prime minister's home district. The findings are included in a report published by the National Citizens' Coalition, which launched a campaign this week to expose wasteful federal government spending. The report, dubbed "Tales From The Tax Trough III — The Liberal Edition", said the coach/conductor comparison cost 105,000 Canadian dollars (\$76,000). The government also spent 500,000 Canadian dollars (\$360,000) on the canoe shrine.

## Pregnant U.S. runaway older than thought

HOUSTON (R) — A pregnant runaway girl who touched off an international search because she was thought too young to safely give birth turned out to be older than previously believed, Texas police said. She was also not as far along in her pregnancy as had been reported, nor going by her correct name, officials said. The girl, originally identified as Cindy Garcia but now said to be Adela Quintana, and her 22-year-old boyfriend Pedro Roman Sotelo were captured late Wednesday in a Houston apartment. Houston Police Department Sgt. Buddy Williams told Reuters that under questioning Thursday the girl's mother, Francisca Quintana, changed her original story and said her daughter was 14, not 10, although she was still unclear about the birthdate. Sgt. Williams said the girl and her friend insisted from the beginning the girl was 14, but said the mother's deception and other discrepancies in the case appeared linked to questions about their citizenship status in the United States. The family came here from Mexico and the girl apparently was born there, he said. The mother said Adela was 10 because she wanted to match the birthdate she earlier put on a birth certificate obtained so the girl could attend school.

## U.N. security team arrives in Burundi

BUJUMBURA (R) — A U.N. team arrived in Burundi Saturday to assess the feasibility of providing guards to protect aid workers in the violence-ridden central African country, described by the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations as being on the "verge of committing national suicide."

The five-strong team included Paul Dahl, the New York-based head of security for the United Nations, a U.N. official told Reuters.

"Dahl is here to assess the security problems of humanitarian agencies and NGOs (non-government organisations) working within the country, and to see whether it would be effective to have United Nations guards protecting their operations," said the official, who asked not to be named.

Mr. Dahl was accompanied by four other officials led by Charles Petrie from the U.N. Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

Earlier this month U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghalil repeated a proposal made six months ago that security guards and a U.N. peacekeeping force be deployed to protect aid workers and prevent full-scale tribal violence between minority Tutsis and majority Hutus.

The Burundi government and its Tutsi-dominated army have strongly rejected any such troops or guards, regardless of the purpose.

On Friday Burundian President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya said his country was suffering a serious crisis but ruled out

foreign military intervention, saying it was no solution.

Mr. Ntibantunganya, whose two predecessors were assassinated, told Reuters that foreign military interventions in Africa were often dismal failures and had no hope of solving Burundi's deeply-rooted ethnic problems.

"We must ask ourselves, who will these troops intervene against, in what way, and how? We had interventions in Liberia, Rwanda... Were their problems solved?" he said.

Burundi has the same ethnic makeup as neighbouring Rwanda where up to a million Tutsis and Hutu moderates were slaughtered by Hutu militia and soldiers in 1994.

More than 100,000 people have been killed in ethnic violence in Burundi since the murder in 1993 of the country's first freely-elected Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye.

Washington's ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright, who visited Burundi last week, told the CNN Friday: "We do see it (Burundi) on the verge of committing national suicide."

Mr. Ntibantunganya Saturday left on a day-long trip to the country's troubled northeast Muyinga district, home to thousands of predominantly Rwandan Hutu refugees.

The refugees are among two million who fled into neighbouring countries in 1994 fearing retribution from the advancing Tutsi army following the

Rwandan genocide.

On Jan. 18, some 15,000 Rwandan Hutus fled from nearby Mugano Camp and crossed into Tanzania to escape from an attack they claimed had been launched by the Burundi army. Four days later another 17,000 refugees from Ntamba Camp, close to Mugano, fled to the border apparently fearing violence from the army.

While the area was reported to be calm Saturday, discussions were being held by the U.N. refugee agency about relocating the refugees to a safer site in the near future.

"We distributed food yesterday (Friday), and around 12,200 people who fled Ntamba Camp have now returned and are being registered," said Hitoshi Mize of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The Security Council Friday reached broad agreement on a resolution warning Burundi's leaders to begin serious negotiations or face an arms embargo as well as a travel ban against extremists.

The resolution, expected to be adopted Monday, also asks Dr. Ghalil to report in detail on his contingency intervention plans should the country explode into a full-scale ethnic war.

Dr. Ghalil in letters and briefings to the Council had suggested standby peacekeepers stationed in neighbouring Zaire, or alternatively, a commitment from nations to earmark a rapid reaction force that could help if trouble broke out.

World  
Cambodia  
rebels fall  
back as  
push con-  
tinues



## Cambodia rebels fall back as push con- tinues

ROUTE 10, Cambodia (R) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas pulled back to defensive positions on the approaches to their Pailin headquarters Saturday as Cambodian government forces pressed a two-pronged offensive against the Communist rebels.

Soldiers returning from the front line said the guerrillas had withdrawn to a strategically-important mountain to regroup.

"At the moment it's quiet because the Khmer Rouge are moving back towards Phnom Veng to gather troops and tanks," one government officer told Reuters at this base 38 kilometres west of Cambodia's second city Banambang and close to forward positions.

Phnom Veng is the last major defensive position before Pailin, the rebels' official headquarters. Government troops said they captured two outposts near the mountain Thursday and were confident of taking it soon.

Police Commander General Hok Londi told Reuters his men were moving forward and securing areas captured by government troops as they advanced towards Pailin.

Government forces have also been in action some 90 kilometres to the north near the border town of Poipet, in a second thrust against the rebels.

Troops met stiff resistance and suffered casualties in unsuccessful attempts to dislodge the guerrillas defending the hilly Phnom Malai area, soldiers in the area said earlier.

The guerrillas, led by the shadowy Pol Pot, have kept up a hit-and-run war against government forces since they boycotted a United Nations-supervised election in 1993.

Pol Pot and his lieutenants were responsible for the deaths of an estimated one million Cambodians during their three-and-a-half years rule after defeating a U.S.-backed government in 1975.

Government forces were humiliated in 1994 after they captured the gem mining town of Pailin, some 85 kilometres west of Battambang, only to lose it a month later to a guerrilla counterattack.

The armed forces have since launched major reforms, including training special forces overseas. They have bought new tanks and are awaiting delivery of some refurbished jets.

Cambodian leaders have played down the current fighting, saying the action was primarily aimed at pushing Khmer Rouge guerrillas back from the vicinity of government-held areas.

Dozens of people have been killed and wounded by Khmer Rouge mortar and artillery attacks on the government town of Poipet in recent weeks.

The Khmer Rouge government was routed by a late 1978 Vietnamese invasion but regrouped with the help of Vietnam's cold war enemies, China and Thailand.

The group signed a 1991 international peace treaty officially ending the war but later rejected a United Nations peace process in the run up to elections.

Since the cut-off of outside support the group has been hit by a rash of defections, but the estimated 8,000-strong force is still seen as a dangerous guerrilla army.



Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating (right) pauses with his wife Anita after he announced a March 2 election in Canberra. Mr. Keating called on voters to give his Labour government time to finish its economic reforms and the integration of Australia into Asia. Labour has been in power in Australia for 13 years (Reuters photo)

## Australian election focuses on Asia, economy and republic

CANBERRA (R) — Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating Saturday called an election for March 2, asking voters to give him time to finish his economic reforms, the integration of Australia with Asia and his push for a republic.

"This election, more than anything else, will be about leadership, about a further mandate for the government that has given Australia a place in the world, that's remade Australia into an open, competitive country," Mr. Keating told reporters.

"At stake is Australia's continuing emergence as a successful partner and player in Asia and the Pacific."

But the Labour Party, which Mr. Keating has led since late 1991, trails heavily in opinion polls, largely because it has held power for 13 years, and Liberal-National opposition leader John Howard seized on perceptions that Labour's time is up.

"All of the signs of atrophy and decay are apparent in that government — the arrogance, the lack of contact with reality, the failure to appreciate the fundamental problems of Australian society and the Australian economy," Mr. Howard told reporters.

"All of those characteristics are those of a government who's been in power for far too long," he said.

Mr. Keating, from a working class background but with sophisticated tastes in clothing, artistic design and architecture, is famously arrogant.

One cartoonist portrays him as Louis XIV of France.

Mr. Howard needs just seven seats in the 148-seat House of Representatives to gain power, and a National swing of 0.5 per cent or less would deliver them to him.

Mr. Howard himself is an old-timer in Australian politics — he was treasurer in the conservatives' last government, which lost office in the middle of a recession, and then led them in opposition, and to defeat, in the 1987 election.

"John Howard's already had a chance in government and he gave us double digit inflation and double digit unemployment," Mr. Keating said.

Mr. Keating said Mr. Howard would prevent Australia becoming a republic, dropping Britain's Queen Elizabeth as head of state.

"Australians will have to decide between a Labour government which will guarantee they have a vote on this issue, and a coalition which is divided on it and led by a man who is passionately opposed to an Australian republic," Mr. Keating said.

The opposition has strongly led the government in opinion polls since Mr. Howard took over as opposition leader a year ago.

The latest polls show the lead as seven percentage points or more, compared with zero when Mr. Keating called the 1993 election, which he won against all odds.

But Mr. Keating, acknowledged as Australia's most effective political campaigner in generations, won the 1993 election despite record unemployment and analysts refuse to write him off this time.

Mr. Keating's 1993 campaign focused strongly on the radical and unusually detailed economic reform policies of the then opposition leader, John Hewson.

Mr. Howard has made no such mistake, having said little of what he would do if elected. The few policies he has announced have been uncontroversial — for example, reform of the industrial relations system but with a guarantee workers will not suffer.

"That's the difference this time," said opinion pollster Gary Morgan. "Although Howard may not be as strong or as colourful or as provocative or as entertaining, he'll be playing with a straight bat, he'll be hard to catch out."

On Saturday Mr. Keating sought to pin on to Mr. Howard the Liberal-National harsh reform policies of 1993, which included a highly unpopular plan for a consumption tax and budget cuts.

"Most of Mr. Howard's front bench were, just three years ago, avid supporters of the most radically right-wing programme ever put to an Australian electorate — and none more avid than Mr. Howard," the prime minister said.

Australia's preferential voting system largely excludes minor parties from the lower house.

The unusual system aims at producing a winner who pleases as many voters as possible by redistributing the votes of the least successful candidates, following the voters' numbered preferences, until someone has more than 50 per cent.

Voting is compulsory in Australia.

## Mrs. Clinton testifies on Whitewater records

WASHINGTON (R) — First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton said she testified under oath before a federal grand jury Friday that she did not know how missing Whitewater documents suddenly turned up in the White House.

"I was glad to have the opportunity to tell the grand jury what I've been telling all of you: I do not know how the billing records came to be found where they were found," she told reporters at the courthouse after finishing four hours of unprecedented secret testimony.

The documents suddenly

turned up on a table in the White House living quarters last August, discovered by a presidential aide. But the aide did not realise what they were until early this month, and they were then given to investigators.

"I, like everyone else, would like to know the answer about how those documents showed up after all these years...I tried to be as helpful as I could," the first lady said of her testimony. She alone has the right to comment publicly on what occurred behind the closed doors of the jury chamber.

The grand jury is looking into financial affairs involving both Mrs. Clinton and President Bill Clinton when he was governor of Arkansas in the 1980s.

The investigation centres on an Arkansas land development project called Whitewater, the failed Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan Institution owned by the Clintons' partner in the land deal, and whether there have been any efforts to cover up the affair, which has embarrassed the White House.

Mrs. Clinton said other topics were discussed during her grand jury appearance, but most of the questioning focused on the mysterious issue of the missing billing records showing how much work she had done for the savings and loan.



First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton speaks to reporters outside a heavily guarded Washington courthouse prior to testifying before a federal grand jury investigating possible criminal wrongdoing in the Whitewater affair (Reuters photo)

## Admiral: U.S. Watching China-Taiwan tension

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States is closely watching the tense situation between China and Taiwan, the admiral chosen to head the U.S. Pacific Military Command told Congress.

The Pentagon, meanwhile, confirmed that the U.S. aircraft carrier Nimitz had steamed through the strait between China and Taiwan last month but denied flatly that the move was meant to intimidate Beijing.

Adm. Joseph Prueher testified at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, responding to a New York Times report Wednesday that Beijing had informed Washington it had completed plans to launch an attack on Taiwan after elections there in March.

"The situation is very closely monitored," Adm. Prueher said regarding the Times report.

China regards Taiwan as a renegade province and has maintained a general threat to attack the island if Taipei drops a pledge to reunify and declares its independence.

John Warner, a Republican senator from Virginia, said he believed tensions between China and Taiwan were as dangerous as those between North and South Korea.

"I view that situation as a hair-trigger one," Sen. Warner said. "We've got to be prepared to evaluate all options."

The Defence Department said Friday a mid-level Chinese military delegation would visit Washington next week to discuss "logistics modernisation" of the People's Liberation Army but it said Taiwan was not on the official agenda for the Jan. 28-Feb. 10 visit.

Pentagon officials confirmed reports by Taiwan newspapers Friday that the Nimitz and its escort battle group sailed through international waters in the Taiwan Strait on Dec. 19-20 but said it was en route to Hong Kong for a port call.

"It wasn't a show of force to China or anyone. It was simply a transit in international waters," said Marine Maj. Steve Manuel, a Pentagon spokesman. He said the carrier was now in the northern gulf.

Maj. Manuel and other officials said the Nimitz was not the first U.S. carrier to sail through the strait since Washington switched diplomatic ties to Beijing from Taipei in 1979.

The newspaper reports said China had protested the voyage. They quoted U.S. officials as saying the Nimitz had originally been scheduled to sail along Taiwan's east coast but changed its route to the strait because of bad weather.

Adm. Prueher said he believed U.S. policy towards China should be: "Deal firmly but not make the PRC (People's Republic

of China) feel in a cornered situation."

The United States has no official relations with Taiwan but does sell Taipei weapons. Sen. Warner noted that U.S. law requires the president to notify Congress whenever there is evidence of a threat to Taiwan.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Thursday the United States saw no imminent Chinese threat to Taiwan.

China also denied the attack plan report Wednesday but took a more ambivalent line Thursday, with a government spokesman declining comment.

Meanwhile despite mounting tensions with China, Taiwan's president pledged Saturday to uphold the nation's security after he wins presidential elections in March.

Lee Teng-Hui added that he was determined to maintain the nation's stability and security for at least half a century if he and his vice presidential running mate, Premier Lien Chan, were elected, the state-run Central News Agency (CNA) reported.

Mr. Lee did not say how he would safeguard Taiwan's future, nor did he mention the U.S. newspaper report that China has plans to attack Taiwan after the presidential polls on March 23.

China Thursday declined comment on the New York

Times report which said China would make one conventional missile strike on Taiwan a day for 30 days.

CNA quoted Mr. Lee as saying the presidential elections, the first on this island, would reaffirm Taiwan's "national sovereignty" — using a term sure to irritate Beijing, which regards this island as a renegade province without claims to sovereignty.

The elections, in which Taiwan people will directly choose their top leaders, would be a major democratic reform, CNA quoted Mr. Lee as saying in southern city of Kaohsiung during a campaign tour.

The New York Times report said the attack would be aimed at forcing Mr. Lee, likely winner of the elections, to scale back his efforts to gain greater international recognition for Taiwan.

China has lambasted Mr. Lee as a "schemer" who is plotting independence for Taiwan from the mainland. Last year it launched two missile tests near the island after Mr. Lee made a landmark trip to the U.S. in June.

It conducted two series of missile tests in the sea north of Taiwan in July and August last year.

President Lee, in remarks late Wednesday after the newspaper report, drew the United States firmly into the picture by asking it to continue to sell weapons to ensure Taiwan's defenses.

China Thursday declined comment on the New York

## British Conservatives portray Labour as hypocrites

LONDON (R) — Britain's ruling Conservative Party Saturday launched a concerted campaign against the main opposition Labour party in a bid to portray it as hypocritical and prepared to say anything to gain power.

The Conservatives are buoyed at the end of a week during which they repeatedly attacked Labour for being hypocrites after the party's health spokeswoman Harriet Harman decided to send her son to an elitist grammar school.

Labour, which officially opposes such schools, has seen its commanding lead in opinion polls drop to about 25 points from the greater than 30 point gap recorded at the start of the year.

Defence Secretary Michael Portillo accused Labour of "organised hypocrisy" in their bid to win the next general election, which

has to be held by May 1997.

"So anxious are they to get their bottoms into ministerial limousines and their legs under a ministerial desk that they will say almost anything, cast any principle aside, in order to gain power," he told Conservative activists in Scotland.

"Labour have now unleashed the politics of double speaking, double dealing, and double standards," Mr. Portillo said.

"They say one thing and do another. They have established one set of rules for the general public, but they wish themselves to operate by a different set of rules which governs the Labour elite."

Conservative Chairman Dr. Brian Mawhinney, the man in charge of running the party's next general election campaign, launched a poster campaign

attacking Labour and its leader Tony Blair.

"Their attitude is the height of cynical inconsistency. As shown on this poster, their view can be summed up as: 'What's good enough for our children is too good for yours,'" he said.

The row over Ms. Harman's decision has injected fresh hope into the Conservatives, who are deeply divided over policy towards the European Union and only have a slim majority in parliament.

Health Secretary Stephen Dorrell urged Conservatives to stop looking for "easy escape routes" and called on the party to fight and beat Labour at the next election.

"They say one thing and do another. So how do we defeat them? It's very easy. We simply tell the truth. We present the people with the

facts. We expose the hypocrisy."

"Most of all, we stop looking for easy escape routes. For too long Conservatives have made a habit of wishing themselves somewhere else," he said in a speech in central England.

"There is only one way to win and that is to fight. Once we try it we'll find it a great deal easier than we think."

But despite the Conservative's new-found optimism, the party is still deeply divided.

British Finance Minister Kenneth Clarke, the most pro-European member of government, was forced Friday to issue a statement denying reports of damaging rifts over policy and strategy with Prime Minister John Major.

## Greece still seeks German war reparations

ATHENS (R) — Greece said Friday it was still seeking war reparations from Germany, including repayment of a loan Athens was forced to give the occupying Nazis during World War II.

"We will express our views and see what the German answer will be," Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos said. "Just because the other side says 'no' every time you ask, it does not mean you stop asking for what you want."

Mr. Pangalos, who ruled Germany when European affairs minister with his

frank comments on Bonn's policy in the Balkans, was speaking at his first news conference since he became foreign minister last week.

Germany rebuffed a formal request in November for reparations, saying the claim 50 years after the end of war was unprecedented and exceptional.

It said Greece was not entitled to more than the 115 million marks (\$81 million) it received under a 1960 agreement that then West Germany signed for Greek citizens "who suffered as a result of Nazi persecution."

Greece has not given a specific amount for its claim, but the loan taken by the Nazis in 1942 was for 15 billion marks (\$10.6 billion) and Greek newspapers have said total damages at today's prices could reach \$35 billion.

Greece says as many as 130,000 people were killed by the Nazis, another 300,000 died from hunger and 125,000 houses were destroyed. More than 65,000 Greek Jews died in Nazi concentration camps.

Mr. Pangalos, who is best known abroad for once likening Germany to "a

giant with bestial force and a child's brain," had harsh words for fellow NATO member Turkey.

He said Greece would try to persuade its European Union allies that treating Turkey with velvet gloves did not help to improve its human rights record but actually worsened it.

"Things have not improved after the (EU-Turkey) customs union," he said. "We will try to convince our partners that what is needed is pressure on Turkish authorities because pampering has proved to have no result."

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## Jordan Times

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:  
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Director General:  
MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:  
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:  
Jordan Press Foundation,  
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

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## The age and blood ties

TWO CHILDREN, both under eight years, from the Aqaba region have got engaged in line with the wishes of their families. It is the first reported engagement involving children as young as that in Jordan and the incident as a whole has been fascinating not only for us in Jordan but also for many in the West. But it is not an unheard-of custom in the Middle Eastern society, or, for that matter, anywhere else in the Third World or the Orient. We know that child engagements, and child marriages to a limited extent, are widely practised in India, the second most populous country in the world. Notwithstanding intense campaigns against such practices, little has changed on the ground in this context, whether in India or anywhere else in the Orient. Quite simply, it is a tradition that has been followed in many societies; and we leave it to social workers and defenders of the rights of children to argue and figure out whether the Aqaba engagement is child "abuse" or nothing untoward, given that the actual marriage would be conducted, in all likelihood, only after the bride and groom attain physical maturity.

However, what concerns us and should concern our society at large is one of the more alarming traditions that the engagement has underlined. The two betrothed are not only way under age; they are also first cousins. In our society unions in marriage between first cousins are widely condoned, even welcomed, in a family context, but where little regard is given to the scientifically-proven fact that such wedlocks are genetically inadvisable. It has been established that, often, the offspring of couples with blood ties to each other tends to be born with serious physical or mental impairment or develop health problems as they grow up.

For decades now in Jordan, our health authorities and social organisations as well as United Nations agencies have been trying to raise awareness among our people that marrying blood relatives was not desirable if only because of the health hazards. That is not to say that every such marriage would produce physically or mentally handicapped children, but the chances are strong that they could.

Statistics speak for themselves. Jordan ranks among those countries with an alarmingly high number of physically disabled children, and it is a safe bet that a good number of the disabled children among us are the offspring of first cousins.

It is a national loss to have a single child born with physical disabilities simply because the society at large is deprived of that human being's positive contribution to development. Beyond that, however, is the immense effort that some of our institutions, many of which are led personally by members of the Royal Family, have been exerting to set up special programmes and projects for "special education" targeting mentally retarded and physically disabled children. As things stand now, it is a never-ending struggle, and there would never be enough room in such establishments to meet the demand because of the mounting number of children who require special education.

Effectively, what we are facing today is an extremely difficult situation. On the one hand, we are engaged in a Herculean effort to develop special education and ensure that it reaches the maximum number of needy children. On the other hand, the number of needy children is growing unchecked and at a rate two or three times than the actual increase in room for such children in special education institutions.

One of the key answers to the problem could be pre-marital medical check-ups which could largely establish whether the individual health peculiarities of the would-be spouses, whether cousins or otherwise, would contribute to imperfect children being born. No doubt, such an arrangement is highly controversial at best in view of the social norms and traditions of our society. But it is also a safe bet that no parent would like to allow his or her son or daughter to get married knowing very well that there is the element of health risk involved in that particular marriage.

We already have the makings of pre-nuptial health tests, but it is imperative that the system is nurtured and expanded to reach each and every Jordanian, whether in Amman or in the outlying areas.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT IS BECAUSE the Palestine National Council (PNC) only has the power to scrap any part of the Palestinian charter or enact a new charter that Israel has allowed its members living abroad to return to Palestine, said Fahed Al Fanek, a writer for Al Ra'i. For any change in the charter there must be a two-third majority vote for the council whose members do not see eye to eye with President Arafat in this matter, added the writer. Not only many PNC members are opposed to changing the charter, they do neither approve of the Oslo deal with Israel and, therefore, these members are bound to create new problems for Mr. Arafat and for Israel, he continued. Israel is keen on having the Palestinians change their charter and is expected to put additional pressures on Mr. Arafat and the newly elected legislative council to achieve that end, said to the writer. He said that factions opposing Mr. Arafat should not be allowed to disrupt the peace process and it must be noted that they have no alternative solution but to back the majority of Palestinians who are now building their nation and creating the independent state.

## Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

## The dinar is getting stronger, making it attractive to depositors

SEVERAL MEASURES were taken recently which should strengthen the Jordanian dinar, secure its future and demonstrate the resolve of the authorities, supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to stand by the dinar and make it a currency on whose stability one can bet his savings.

Among these measures are the full liberalisation of the dinar, make the dinar a convertible currency with all the obligations that go with such a status, fix the exchange rate of the dinar against the dollar at \$1.41, raise the scale of interest rate on the dinar to a level which is 5 percentage points above the prevailing inflation rate and 4 percentage points above the prevailing rate of interest on the dollar, currently at 5.5 per cent.

All these measures and policies aim at one direction, i.e., a strong and dependable dinar. Foreign investors and Jordanian expatriates can now bring their capital into the country and take it out of the country anytime, with no question asked. Currencies move freely without prior approvals or exchange permits, irrespective of whether the transactions take place through the banking system or through the authorised moneychangers.

To abandon the old basket of five currencies to which the dinar was pegged, and the contents of which were never revealed, and to link the dinar, instead, to the dollar, means that maintaining the dinar is now equivalent to maintaining dollars. Both currencies will rise and fall simultaneously. The dollar value of the dinar will no more fluctuate, as was the case before when the interest differential was ineffective.

Since the dollar is the most important currency in the world, fixing the dinar with the dollar, while leaving the interest rate on the dinar much higher, should make the dinar more attractive to depositors, who can make 4 per cent more by shifting to the dinar, on the understanding that they can revert back to the dollar if they need in the

future, at the same rate of exchange fixed in advance, without having to take any exchange risk.

Some businessmen used to deposit their capital in dollars to earn tax-free interest, then they would borrow dinars through overdraft accounts hoping that their dollars will buy more dinars in the future. Those businessmen will now realise that they are unnecessarily punishing themselves and paying a difference of interest which can reach 9 per cent. They earn around 5 per cent on their dollars and pay 14 per cent on the dinar overdraft. Such a situation is no more tolerable, and many businessmen and managers are reconsidering their strategy. To continue speculating against the dinar is now more costly. It is becoming sort of a suicidal policy.

The move to raise the interest rate on the dinar came to complement the move to fix the dinar in dollar terms to make the interest differential obvious and to prove the superiority of the dinar over foreign currencies, as a store of value for savings.

The IMF, which is known to be obsessed with devaluations in most Third World countries, did not recommend any devaluation of the dinar. On the contrary, the IMF agreed enthusiastically with the firm policy of the authorities to maintain the stability of the dinar and reinforce the confidence in its current realistic value.

It was proved that the current exchange rate of the dinar is not hurting the export effort. If anything, exports grew at 25 per cent in 1995 and the deficit in the current account of the balance of payments is steadily shrinking, which suggests that the dinar is not overvalued.

The IMF will help the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) double its net reserves in foreign exchange during 1996, to cover at least 2.5 months of imports, and enhance the confidence in the future of the dinar and the creditworthiness of the country.



## Russia still faces struggle on human rights

By Timothy Heritage

Reuter  
Moscow — The Council of Europe's decision to admit Russia crowns a huge improvement in human rights since Soviet days, but rights activists fear it could blind Moscow to the need to keep improving its record.

A decade ago, political opposition was outlawed in the Soviet Union, police suppression was tough and commonplace, travel and religious freedoms were restricted and political censorship of the arts was just starting to ease.

Those days are largely gone. But human rights monitors say Russia still does not meet the usual standards for joining the Council of Europe and in some areas, things are getting worse.

They say Russia will face problems carrying out, or finding the will to carry out, all of its recommendations.

These include demands to abolish the death penalty, protecting minorities and allowing a committee to monitor Russia's military campaign breakaway Chechnya.

"To be fair, it is light years away from the Soviet Union of 1984 or 1985," said Rachel Denber, head of the Moscow Office of the Human Rights Watch/Helsinki group.

"One has to admit that great changes have been

made, but one must take notice of the abuse of human rights of the last two years. In terms of human rights violations, things have probably got worse in the last two years."

Ms. Denber, whose organisation issued a statement slamming the Council of Europe's decision in Strasbourg Thursday, feared Moscow could get complacent now that it had been voted in.

"If we see changes carried out, the Council of Europe decision is great. If not, it will make a mockery of the Council of Europe and send all the wrong signals to Moscow," she said.

"All indications so far suggest the political will (for human rights reforms) has shrivelled. The Council of Europe must now monitor the implementation of human rights and be prepared to get tough if necessary."

Accession to the Council of Europe, which will go ahead in February or March, achieved one of the goals Mr. Yeltsin has long aimed for. It has failed to enter the European Union or NATO.

An aide to Mr. Yeltsin indicated the Kremlin was aware it must press on with human rights reforms to meet European standards and the president was ready to meet the challenge.

"On the one hand it (the council's decision) is a victory for the healthy think-

ing of the Europeans, but on the other it increases Russia's obligations to the Europeans," said foreign policy advisor Dmitry Ryurikov.

Many Russian politicians also welcomed the Council of Europe's decision. But others suggested the Council of Europe could have sent a powerful message by delaying its decision.

"If it had not admitted Russia now, it might have given an impetus to renewing peace talks in Chechnya," said Gleb Yakunin, a former dissident and a member of parliament until December.

The daily Nezavisimaya Gazeta said: "besides gaining recognition as a democratic country, entering the Council of Europe will face Russia with many problems."

Mr. Yeltsin is unlikely to welcome an independent commission observing events in Chechnya and any upsurge in Russia's military campaign there in which thousands of civilians have died could embarrass the Council of Europe.

Problems could arise over abolishing judicial executions which are carried out in Russia by a single bullet fired into the back of the head.

Although some deputies say such a motion could be passed, some may be wary of supporting such moves

when crime is a big issue and many Russians appear to favour a crackdown on criminals.

Improving the lot of ethnic minorities could also be a tall order. Many dark-skinned people, including those from the Caucasus area which includes Chechnya, have been driven out of Moscow in recent years and Ms. Denber says racism is on the rise.

The criminal justice system remains loose and abuse of army conscripts, who lack a truly independent body to turn to, is widespread, human rights activists say.

Sergei Kovalyov, who has just quit as chairman of Mr. Yeltsin's presidential human rights committee, said last month that human rights abuses were now "systematic and flagrant" in many areas.

He cited the reintroduction of permits allowing the right to live in big cities and a decree signed by Mr. Yeltsin last year allowing detention of suspects without charge for 30 days.

He and Ms. Denber suggested the federal security service, one of several branches created when the KGB was abolished in 1991, had now won similar powers to its secret police predecessor.

"These are the signs of a police state being reborn before our eyes," Mr. Kovalyov said.

## Do our nations' leaders talk to each other?

By Guido Brummer

MADRID — The news right now is not good on either side of the Atlantic.

Europe, caught in the entanglements of the Maas-tricht plan, has rising unemployment. The German locomotive is stalling; almost one in 10 members of the workforce has no job. In other countries, even more people are on the dole.

Opinion polls agree on one point: optimism is shrinking for 1996. Employers, unions and governments hold protracted meetings trying to square the circle, offering more job stability against a freezing of salaries. But there are limits to this in an era of worldwide competition, when big business has to increase productivity, and plans for dismissals of further thousands are being drawn up.

All of a sudden the awareness is growing that lowering of interest rates by central banks cannot be the cure of all ills. Something more must happen — new retraining programmes, public works, more offers of services. Helmut Kohl, a politician with fine instincts and possibly the most underrated leader since Harry Truman, devoted the bulk of his New Year's message to unemployment.

Under the conditions, and regardless of claims of a new European assertiveness toward America, everybody looks to Washington for guidance.

Cures with drastic cuts of social budgets are certainly no solution for Europe. People here resent shrinking their closely knit safety net of education, health and unemployment support, as last month's French strikes clearly showed. Nor would you find many willing to shovel snow for \$10 a day, as you do in New York City.

But whatever the concern that some aspects of American social decay cause in Europe, there is a basic admiration of America's production capacity and the

ability of ordinary Americans to master their destiny in difficult circumstances.

This is why the budget quarrel in Washington is so upsetting and detrimental to the public image of the United States. People in Europe expect a tight rein on public affairs in America, an orderly reduction of deficits but not at any cost, a higher dollar improving the outlook of Europe's exports, now that energy prices are on the rise again. What they cannot accept is a revival boat scenes among politicians such as they have seen in the movies.

For the typical European investor, it is simply hair-raising that one statement by Newt Gingrich can cause Wall Street to break through the floor, lose almost 100 points in a single day and give every market in the world the jitters.

There is more to this than just stock market movements. Public trust is involved, and the United States as the world's last remaining great power should be aware of it.

An American president has, like it or not, a universal constituency. Sudden loss of trust is the stuff of which big economic and social trouble is made.

One is reminded of the period before the crash of October 1987, when consultation among Europe, Japan and the United States was sterile. Citizens could wonder whether their leaders ever talked to each other.

Let us not repeat that experience. Communism has fallen, but the many could again choose to part company with a modern capitalism that inadvertently gambles away the progress and liberties it has brought. Recent results of elections in Russia and Eastern Europe, with Communists running well, should make us think twice.

The writer, a former European commissioner and German ambassador to Spain, contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.

## Pakistan-India relations hit rock-bottom after mosque attack

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Relations between India and Pakistan, already severely strained by the possibility of an Indian nuclear test, have sharply deteriorated after 18 worshippers were killed in a rocket attack on a mosque in Pakistani Kashmir.

Pakistan immediately accused India of having launched Friday's rocket attack, which also left 20 people seriously injured, as the armies of the two south Asian neighbours traded heavy fire along the Kashmir frontier Saturday, according to Indian military sources.

A spokesman for the ministry of defence here said it had been "a deliberate and wanton attempt at provocation" by the Indian army, a charge denied by New Delhi.

Two rockets slammed into the mosque in the town of Kahuta, near the dividing line of control in Kashmir between Pakistan and India, during the weekly prayer day for Muslims.

"They must have known that Friday prayers were going on and deliberately targeted a place where loss of life could be maximum," a foreign office spokesman said.

The mosque was also particularly full as it is the Ramadan holy month of fasting for Muslims. Pakistan and India have fought two of their three wars since independence in 1947 over control of Kashmir, where more than 12,000 people have died in the past five years.

India holds two thirds of Kashmir and Pakistan the remainder of a territory once known as the "Switzerland of the Himalayas," the mosque attack also took place on the national day of India, which was also declared a "black day" and a day of mourning by Muslim insurgents in Kashmir.

Pictures of two surface-to-surface Prithvi missiles displayed during the republic day ceremony in New Delhi Friday were on the front page of many Pakistani newspapers Saturday.

Pakistan has frequently warned against the deployment of this missile, which is nuclear capable and can strike all main Pakistani cities within 3 to 4 minutes of launching.

Prithvi is considered by officials here to have been developed solely with the aim of hitting Pakistan. The missile has become a major cause of concern for the Pakistani government.

Relations between the two countries had already noseived following U.S. press reports that India had conducted a second nuclear test. The first test was carried out in 1974.

Last week, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto warned during an official visit to Japan that such a test by India would have "horrible results" for the sub-continent.



## Bahrainis hope all roads lead to jobs

By Christine Hauser

**RZAKKAN**, Bahrain  
Along the narrow roads  
ding through Bahrain's  
Shiite villages, call-  
graffiti call-  
for political reform  
ish the walls of houses  
shops.  
We demand parliament"  
is a slogan in Karza-  
n village.  
Parliament" is the popu-  
buzword of the opposi-  
i in Bahrain, where two  
of three members of the  
igenous population are  
slim Shiites and the  
ni-dominated govern-  
nt has threatened martial  
to deal with protests.  
ut the success of any  
rms could depend on  
at people are able to put  
their tables.  
The violence eased in  
April but recently flared  
anew, with protesters set-  
ting explosions and riot  
police using teargas and  
rubber bullets to quell  
demonstrations.  
The government warned  
over the weekend that it  
might impose martial law  
to crush the dissent "once  
and for all" and the mili-  
tary said the Bahraini de-  
fence force was ready to  
carry out any orders to  
confront what it called  
a "terrorist plot".  
The government says it  
will restore any parliam-  
ent in its own time, and  
is studying developing its  
consultative council.  
In Karzakk, a group of  
men sat in a semi-circle  
outside a house talking  
politics over cups of sweet  
lemon tea. Inside women  
baked bread and next door  
an engagement party was  
in full swing.  
Tattered black flags flut-

tered from rooftops,  
reminders of the victims  
of the unrest.  
"We want parliament. The  
Sunni, they give them high  
positions. The Shiites, they  
give them mostly labour  
jobs," said Abdel, who said  
he was unemployed and  
declined like many others  
to give his full name.  
"By having a parliament  
it will encourage them (Shi-  
ites) to go to university. It  
will give them hope," said  
Abu Ali.  
The 1995 U.S. human  
rights report on Bahrain  
said there were trends in the  
types of employment for  
Sunni and Shiites.  
"Sunni generally receive  
preference for employment  
in sensitive government  
positions and in the man-  
agerial ranks of the civil  
service," the report, a pub-  
lic document, said.  
"Shiites are not allowed  
to hold significant posts in  
the defence and internal  
forces. However, they  
occupy most of the senior  
positions in the major gov-  
ernment-owned industries  
and are disproportionately  
represented in the educa-  
tional sphere."  
In general, lower-paid  
workers in the private sec-  
tor tend to be Shi'a because  
of the larger proportion...  
who are poorly educated,"  
said the report, which cov-  
ers 1994 and some of 1995.  
There was no available  
evidence of any systematic  
job discrimination.  
Labour Minister Abdul  
Nabi Al Shula, a Shiite, has  
said that the Gulf Arab  
states planned to increase  
training programmes to  
help find more jobs for  
unemployed nationals.

Labour Ministry figures  
published in Akhbar Al  
Khaleej daily said 4,409  
people were registered  
unemployed at the end of  
August, out of an estimated  
workforce of 239,000, or  
about 1.8 per cent.  
The U.S. embassy com-  
mercial guide for Bahrain  
for fiscal year 1996 puts the  
total unemployed rate at 15  
per cent.  
There are about 130,000  
foreign workers in Bahrain,  
which has a total popula-  
tion of 550,000.  
"Why should there be any  
foreigners working in  
Bahrain when we have  
unemployment?" asked a  
man at the Karzakk gath-  
ering.  
"We finish school but  
there's no work," said  
another.  
"A lot of people come out  
of university and expect to  
go into white-collar jobs,"  
the diplomat said. "The  
government realises unem-  
ployment is a problem and  
is doing its best with train-  
ing programmes."  
Bahrain raised foreigners  
work permit fees this  
month and Shula has said  
the money would go to job  
training for nationals.  
One area where foreign-  
ers, mostly Baluchis from  
Pakistan and Indians, domi-  
nate the work force, is in  
the public security ranks  
responsible for putting  
down anti-government  
protests.  
Some residents say this  
fuels their resentment.  
"Bahrainis could never  
police Bahrainis. The coun-  
try is too small. Everybody  
knows everybody's fami-  
ly," said a diplomat.

## Saudi Arabia's growing pains — cruising into the 21st century

By Gwynne Dyer

**THE ARCHITECT** who  
designed the Saudi Arabian  
Ministry of Interior had a  
sense of humour. The build-  
ing squats over north-cen-  
tral Riyadh like a huge fly-  
ing saucer, and you half-  
expect to see green rays  
flickering out from it to  
control the citizenry.  
But the image is false; the  
vast majority of Saudis  
back the system voluntarily.  
And after a hectic two  
months that saw five U.S.  
soldiers killed by a terrorist  
bomb in Riyadh, King Fahd  
felled by a stroke, and the  
appointment of a regent to  
rule in his stead on Jan. 1,  
stability is everybody's  
prize concern.  
It's fourteen years since  
the last change of ruler in  
Saudi Arabia, so it is not  
surprising that the country's  
foreign allies have been  
feeling nervous recently.  
But two weeks of conversa-  
tions with (male) Saudis  
from all walks of life leave  
a quite different impression  
about the nature of the  
problem.  
These are times of auster-  
ity in the desert kingdom  
which produces one-tenth  
of the world's oil. The gov-  
ernment has cut spending  
on social services and  
raised prices for water,  
electricity and telephones  
(which used to be almost  
free). Everybody is feeling  
the pinch, and car imports  
have dropped 40 per cent  
since last year.  
Saudis used to buy a new  
car whenever the ashrafy  
filled up; now they are  
learning to empty the ash-  
trays. But the average Saudi  
still has a lot to lose. All  
the kids are in school (both  
boys and girls), nobody  
lacks food, shelter and a job  
— and everybody over 30  
can remember a time when  
Saudi Arabia's health, edu-

cation and income levels  
were not much better than  
Kenya's. Now they are  
more like southern Califor-  
nia's.  
Indeed, the three biggest  
cities, Riyadh, Jeddah and  
Dammam, all look like  
slices of Orange County  
with mosques. And when  
Saudis look around their  
neighbourhood and com-  
pare their lot with the  
impoverished citizens of  
fundamentalist-ruled Iran,  
or the terrorised subjects of  
Saddam Hussein's police  
state in Iraq, they are still  
inclined to count their  
blessings.  
Foreign journalists tend  
to fixate on the kingdom's  
strict limitations on women  
(who must appear veiled in  
public and are not allowed  
to drive), and on its habit of  
chopping off the heads of  
drug smugglers and the  
hands of thieves. But this  
sort of thing worries the  
average Saudi Arabian  
male, a devout and deeply  
conservative Muslim, not  
one whit.  
At a slightly higher level  
of analysis, outside  
observers fret about the  
growing influence of "fun-  
damentalists" who peddle a  
radical, politicised Islam;  
about the rampant corrup-  
tion that infests all levels of  
government and business in  
Saudi Arabia; or about the  
lingering military threat  
from Iraq.  
Ordinary Saudis worry  
about these things too, but  
their focus is rather differ-  
ent. They believe that the  
primary responsibility for  
defending the oil-fields from  
Iraq (or Iran) should  
and will be shouldered by  
the United States, which  
continues to build up its  
permanent bases through-  
out the Gulf.  
Saudi Arabia's own  
armed forces, by contrast,  
are mainly seen as a pretext

for huge arms purchases  
that waste the kingdom's  
money but allow huge rake-  
offs for everyone involved  
in the contracts. It is a fair  
assessment: one U.S. mili-  
tary advisor checked the  
odometers on some tanks  
sold to Saudi Arabia ten  
years ago, and found that  
they had been driven an  
average distance of only 60  
miles in a decade.  
Saudis worry about the  
fundamentalist threat, too,  
but as one businessman  
pointed out: "All of our  
fundamentalists have jobs."  
Mostly government jobs,  
and the growing influence  
of religious ultra-conserva-  
tives as they rise in the  
bureaucracy is having  
effects on the Saudi educa-  
tion system in particular.  
But people with steady jobs  
rarely lead revolutions.  
The corruption is on  
everybody's mind. "You  
can no longer do serious  
business here without  
princely cover," laments  
one Saudi lawyer, and there  
is a strong sense of resent-  
ment about the perks and  
influence-peddling of the  
proliferating princes.  
Nobody begrudges men  
like King Fahd or Crown  
Prince Abdullah their privi-  
leges, but in the past 40  
years the royal family has  
had a population explosion.  
People still talk about 5,000  
royal princes, but the real  
figure is now more like 15-  
20,000. They are a major  
economic burden on the  
state, but it is political  
dynamite to cut them loose  
since most lack any gainful  
employment.  
Where all the worries  
come together, however, is  
in the demographic explo-  
sion. Half of the kingdom's  
naive population is under  
fifteen. Finding jobs for all  
these kids will be decisive  
for the stability and even  
the survival of the Saudi  
system.

There are now about 12  
million Saudis and 5 mil-  
lion foreigners in the king-  
dom, but the employment  
picture is very different.  
The foreigners are mostly  
adult males, and 4.3 million  
of them have jobs. Sixty per  
cent of the Saudis are under  
19, and only 2.4 million of  
the native Saudi population  
are employed.  
Over the next four years,  
Saudi Arabia must find jobs  
for 600,000 new high  
school and university grad-  
uates. Then the situation  
gets even worse; from the  
year 2000, there will be  
over 300,000 young males  
trying to enter the work-  
force every year (not to  
mention the many girls who  
will also want jobs).  
You cannot create these  
new jobs just by eliminat-  
ing the foreign workers;  
only 12 per cent have jobs  
that can easily be "Saud-  
ised". You have to industri-  
alise the Saudi state, and  
even create a Saudi work-  
ing class — which means  
huge social changes as  
well. This is where all the  
risks of instability intersect.  
If the country's present  
ruling elite can create jobs  
for most of the kids, and  
narrow the definition of  
who is "royal" enough to  
merit royal privileges, then  
the system can cruise  
serenely into the 21st cen-  
tury. If not, then dissatisfac-  
tion in general, and the fun-  
damentalists in particular,  
will grow.  
But it is pretty safe for the  
next few years, and at least  
the people in charge seem  
to understand the nature of  
the task.

*The writer is a London-  
based independent journal-  
ist and historian whose  
columns appear in 30  
countries. She contributed  
this article to the Jordan  
Times.*

## Arafat arrives in Amman

(Continued from page 1)

Without this, as an Arab  
man, I do not deem the  
solved in a comprehen-  
sive manner," said Mr.  
a, who attended the  
ing between Mr. Mubara-  
d and Mr. Arafat.  
The next stage of the his-  
tory Israeli-PLO peace  
will tackle the tough  
issues of Jerusalem, Palesti-  
refugees, Jewish settlers  
in West Bank and Gaza,  
the nature of a Palesti-  
nity.  
Mr. Arafat said last week  
it is possible to establish  
alestinian state in 18

months. He told a joint news  
conference with Israeli Prime  
Minister Shimon Peres that  
it was his right to dream of  
having his own country.  
Mr. Peres said he could  
accept the idea as a dream.  
Asked to comment on Mr.  
Peres' remarks, Mr. Arafat  
said: "I don't think it is  
beneficial to comment on these  
statements for the time being  
but I can confirm that a solu-  
tion to the Palestinian prob-  
lem and comprehensive  
peace can only be achieved  
through the establishment of  
a Palestinian state."

## Syria: Differences remain

(Continued from page 1)

talks which resumed on  
Wednesday.  
U.S. officials said Mr.  
Christopher had offered  
"substantive ideas" to Israeli  
and Syrian negotiators to try  
to prod them into faster pro-  
gress at their peace talks.  
State Department spokes-  
man Nicholas Burns said Mr.  
Christopher pushed the two  
five-member negotiating  
teams to speed up their U.S.-  
mediated talks during a visit  
on Thursday evening to the  
Wye Plantation conference  
centre in Maryland.  
"The secretary's message  
to them... was to press very  
hard for movement and to  
look at all issues on the agen-  
da and the secretary did offer  
some substantive ideas... as  
to how we, the United States,  
believe they should move  
forward together," Mr.  
Burns told reporters.  
The spokesman gave no  
details of the ideas.  
Meanwhile Syrian Presi-  
dent Hafez Al Assad held  
talks with his Lebanese coun-  
terpart Elias Hrawi to discuss  
the Middle East peace pro-  
cess and bilateral coopera-  
tion.  
Mr. Assad's spokesman  
Jibril Kourieh said the  
high-ranking Lebanese dele-  
gation included Prime  
Minister Rafik Hariri, Parliam-  
ent Speaker Nabih Berri,  
Foreign Minister Fares  
Bouez and Deputy Prime  
Minister Michel Al Murr,  
who is also interior minister.  
The two-day meeting is the  
fourth annual get-together of  
the Lebanese-Syrian Higher  
Council — a body set up after  
Lebanon and Syria signed in  
1991 a treaty of "brother-  
hood, coordination and coop-  
eration."

The Lebanese secretary  
general of the council, Nasri  
Khouri, said the talks here  
would deal with the peace  
process as well as consolidat-  
ing economic cooperation in  
a bid to set up the nucleus for  
a "common market."  
"The talks will deal with  
the (peace) negotiations be-  
cause it is an essential part of  
bilateral cooperation and  
coordination," Mr. Khouri said  
in statements published by the  
Lebanese press on Saturday.  
He said he expected Leba-  
non and Syria to sign in the  
next few weeks three agree-  
ments to scrap double taxa-  
tion, to promote and guaran-  
tee investments as well as to  
set up joint border offices.  
Lebanon and Syria appear  
to be determined to speed up  
the process of cooperation  
between them amid progress  
in the peace process and the  
resumption of Syrian-Israeli  
talks outside Washington.  
analysts here said.  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of  
State for Near East Affairs  
Robert Pelletreau told Al

Nahar newspaper on Friday  
that "preparations are under-  
way" to revive the stalled  
Lebanese-Israeli peace talks.  
On Thursday Mr. Hrawi  
said Lebanon was ready for  
the resumption of talks.

## Chirac visit to U.S. marks new warmth in ties

By Paul Taylor

Paris — Jacques Chirac is  
the most American of  
French presidents.

He speaks fluent Eng-  
lish, once worked as a  
waiter at a Howard John-  
son's restaurant in his stu-  
dent days and was even  
briefly engaged to a Texan  
belle.  
Next week, he will  
crown a warming in  
France's often prickly ties  
with the United States in  
his first eight months in  
office with a three-day trip  
to Washington and Chic-  
ago, the first state visit by a  
French leader to the U.S.  
since 1984.  
Aides said Mr. Chirac  
would stress France's  
"friendship and fidelity"  
while encouraging an out-  
ward-looking United  
States to be an equal part-  
ner with Europe in NATO  
in world affairs.  
"Relations are good, I  
would say even excellent.  
There are no longer major  
differences on strategic or  
trade issues," said Pascal  
Boniface, director of Paris-  
Nord University's  
Institute For International  
And Strategic Relations.  
"Since the end of the  
cold war, France has  
renewed its relations  
towards the United States.  
But Mr. Chirac's decision  
to move France closer to  
NATO was the important  
gesture," he said.  
France announced in  
December it would rejoin  
the alliance's military  
committee and allow its  
defence minister to attend  
NATO council meetings,  
almost 30 years after pres-  
ident Charles de Gaulle  
stormed out of the U.S.-  
dominated military com-  
mand.  
Only a Gaullist president  
could undo what de Gaulle  
had done, although  
Chirac's Socialist prede-  
cessor, Francois Mitter-  
rand, began the rapproche-  
ment. Mr. Boniface said.  
Mr. Chirac's decision  
marked the end of French  
efforts to build an inde-  
pendent European defence  
outside the North Atlantic

Treaty Organisation,  
although he still hopes to  
build a stronger European  
pillar within the alliance.  
French officials say the  
main issue in his talks with  
President Bill Clinton will  
be the "security architec-  
ture of Europe for the 21st  
century" including a role  
for Russia that avoids cre-  
ating new barriers in  
Europe.  
"France's normalisation  
with NATO was seen by  
the Americans as very pos-  
itive. On the other hand,  
Washington was critical  
when Mr. Chirac resumed  
nuclear testing. So rela-  
tions are complex but  
globally positive," said  
Dominique Moisi, deputy  
director of the French  
Institute for International  
Relations.  
In spite of occasional  
friction over Bosnia,  
audiovisual trade in films  
and television or U.S. con-  
tributions to the United  
Nations and development  
aid, anti-Americanism is  
waning in France and is  
now largely confined to  
the right- and left-wing  
fringes, he said.  
"There is a certain  
Gaullist tradition of  
France playing on its nu-  
ance value with the Uni-  
ted States — 'I contradict,  
therefore I exist'. But  
there is far less tension  
than there used to be, even  
a year ago," Ms. Moisi  
said.  
Only last February, then  
Prime Minister Edouard  
Balladur's government  
caused a rare row between  
allies by making public  
that it had ordered five  
U.S. officials out of  
France for spying related  
to the GATT world trade  
negotiations.  
Mr. Chirac, who defeat-  
ed fellow Gaullist Bal-  
ladur, is regarded as a  
leader of a new generation  
and more open in his atti-  
tude to Washington.

"American policymakers  
are very comfortable with  
Chirac. They know he  
likes America and has a  
stronger, warmer feeling  
than Mitterrand, who was  
capable of equating the  
United States and the  
Soviet Union in the same  
breath," said Professor  
Ronald Tiersky of  
Amherst College, an  
American expert on  
France.  
The most conspicuous  
symbol of this new  
warmth in the eyes of  
some U.S. officials was  
Mr. Chirac's appearance in  
English on CNN televi-  
sion's "Larry King Live"  
programme last October.  
"He came across as a  
regular guy, not as regal or  
arrogant as Mitterrand,"  
one official said.  
French officials say Mr.  
Chirac will stress when he  
addresses a joint session of  
Congress next Thursday  
that, far from seeking to  
drive the United States out  
of Europe as U.S. officials  
long suspected, France  
wants it to remain engaged  
in world affairs.  
His message will be  
aimed more at the Ameri-  
can public and isolation-  
ists notably among the  
Republicans in Congress  
than at the Clinton admin-  
istration, which has  
chalked up successes in  
the Middle East and  
Europe.

In keeping with French  
tradition, Mr. Chirac is  
also likely to make a plea  
for the United States to  
pay its way in the U.N.  
And spend more to help  
Africa.  
"He is bound to play a  
bit of the old French game  
of scoring points by acting  
as the spokesman for the  
world's poor countries  
against the rich superpow-  
er," Mr. Tiersky said.  
On the big issues, France  
is delighted Mr. Clinton  
took the risk of engage-  
ment in the Bosnia conflict,  
to force a diplomatic solu-  
tion and kept his promise  
to send 20,000 soldiers to  
enforce the peace deal  
negotiated in Dayton and  
signed in Paris.  
Although the French  
were irritated by the way  
the Europeans were side-

lined at the Dayton talks,  
their main concern now is  
to make a success of the  
Bosnia peacekeeping  
operation and make sure  
Washington does not  
withdraw before peace is  
secure.  
France agrees with the  
United States that NATO  
should be enlarged to take  
in former Communist  
Central European states  
which are also set to join  
the European Union.  
Paris wants to move  
slowly to avoid frighten-  
ing Russia, while Wash-  
ington wants to take quick  
advantage of a window of  
opportunity it fears could  
close if more stridently  
nationalist forces take  
over in Moscow.  
After a state dinner in  
Washington, Mr. Chirac  
flies to Chicago next Fri-  
day for the economic leg  
of his visit.  
His aim is to underline  
the strengths of a balanced  
European-American eco-  
nomic partnership, with-  
out accepting the Transat-  
lantic free trade area advo-  
cated by Washington and  
its closest friends in  
Europe, notably Britain.  
In American eyes,  
France remains the most  
protectionist of the Euro-  
pean Union countries and  
Mr. Chirac may face pres-  
sure to free up the audio-  
visual market in film and  
television, which Paris  
managed to keep out of  
the 1993 GATT treaty  
under a "cultural excep-  
tion" allowing it to main-  
tain quotas on non-Euro-  
pean programmes.

## No hunger-strike — Bahrain

(Continued from page 1)

the restoration of parlia-  
ment dissolved in 1975. The  
st faded last April but  
med this month.

arrested in connection with  
anti-government protests. On  
Thursday, the government  
said it had arrested an un-  
specified number of people for  
arson attacks in Shi'ite vil-  
lages.

## JPA meets political press editors

(Continued from page 1)

security in Bahrain, com-  
ing the case with that of  
1 Glub, the British com-  
der of the Jordanian  
ed Forces in the 1950s  
was replaced in 1956,  
eaking at Sunday's  
ting. Dr. Karaki said that  
government does not re-  
any request for a licence  
newspaper regardless of  
tews.  
e also said that the Minis-  
of Information will con-  
with the Jordan Press  
ciation (JPA) in all mat-

ters related to the Press and  
Publications Law.  
Dr. Karaki said that the  
Ministry of Information, in  
cooperation with the Ministry  
of Justice, was conducting a  
study on setting up a special  
court to deal with cases in-  
volving the press and journal-  
ists.  
JPA President Suleiman  
Oudah reviewed a number of  
urgent matters and demands  
by Jordanian journalists, par-  
ticularly those working for  
the weekly press.

## Population put at 4.13m

(Continued from page 12)

olved into such issues as  
ilities (see story on page  
fertility, internal migra-  
and participation in eco-  
ic life.  
approximately 10 per cent  
rdians born in Jordan  
migrated from their  
e of birth to another  
anian city. Of these, 58.1  
ent relocated to Amman  
Zarqa, nine per cent  
to Irbid and seven per  
went to Mafrq. This  
nomenon was largely  
buted by the census to  
ter employment opportu-  
s and availability of ser-  
i.  
pproximately 50 per cent  
he population partici-  
d in Jordan's economic  
in 1994 — 83.9 per cent  
e and 16.5 per cent  
ile. Economic participa-  
was defined as: working  
turn for a salary; self-  
loyment; working for an  
prise in which a person

is a partial owner; working  
for a family enterprise with-  
out salary; working in any  
other activity; unemployed  
but previously employed (but  
seeking employment and  
capable of work); unemployed  
and never worked before  
(looking for first-time em-  
ployment and capable of  
work); any student; any  
housewife; anyone with  
income including from  
shares, stocks, interest, char-  
ity or pension; or anyone not  
working due to old age or a  
mental or physical disability.  
Essentially, any person above  
the age of 15 is an economic  
participant.  
Neither the results of the  
census nor the 10 per cent  
population sampling dis-  
closed the rate of unemploy-  
ment for 1994. Dr. Alawin  
told the press that unemploy-  
ment stood at 15.4 per cent  
for 1994 and 15 per cent for  
1995.

## Pakistan offers action full package during cricket tournament

Pakistan, located at the crossroads of Asia, is in close proximity of the Gulf states. It is the venue for the 1996 World Cup Cricket Tournament. This will provide an excellent opportunity for expatriates to come and support their team and watch the giants in cricket compete for the title "World Champions in Cricket". The final match of this thrilling tournament will be held in Lahore on March 17, 1996.

The government has also lined up various cultural events and festivals such as the Dutch Tulip Show, Cultural Train etc. during this period. People can watch cricket and also get a feel of cultural activities of the countries of the participating teams.

Nowadays the 5-star hotels in Karachi are offering exceptionally low, down to earth rates. In fact, in some cases, the rates are as low as \$35 for a double room in a 5-star hotel. This makes it ideal for a person to plan a 3-4 days shopping trip to Karachi. Here one can buy beautiful handmade souvenirs ranging from carpets and bed covers to intricate jewellery, fine metal work, glazed ceramics and beautiful onyx decoration pieces.

In Pakistan you can lie on the golden beaches of Karachi and yet be within 2-hour flying time of snow bound mountains up north. The 5-star Pearl Continental Hotel Bhurban located in the Murce Hills has also launched a snowfall package. You can go there in winter to enjoy the snowfall.

The regions in the north of Pakistan are known for their natural beauty. Pakistan boasts of some of the highest mountains in the world — K-2 and the Nanga Parbat and four of the highest mountain ranges — the majestic Himalayas, the mighty Karakoram and the towering Hindu Kush and Pamirs.

Pakistan International Airlines, the national carrier, operates an Air Safari Flight over the northern areas, once a week every Saturday from Islamabad. This flight enables you to get an aerial view of nature's most spectacular sites. You can see the Nanga Parbat, the Rakaposhi, the Tirch Mir and above all the K-2. The aeroplane also flies over the enchanting valleys of Hunza, Gilgit, Swat, Kaghan and Chitral. The experience lasts a lifetime.

**If you need any further information, you may contact your local PIA office or PIA Tours Promotion Division, Karachi, Pakistan. Fax: 92-21-7727727 / 4570419.**



# Black economy in Jordan is smulse and does not constitute real danger

AMMAN (J.T.) — Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh said in a statement published Saturday that the government was pursuing appropriate measures to stem the country's black economy.

In reply to a query put to him by parliament deputy Nazih Ammarin about clandestine operations which, the deputy said, were growing in magnitude, the minister said that stemming black economy depends primarily on the public's trust in the government policies concerning customs and taxation systems.

According to the minister, black economy can be defined as illicit transactions whose income is not accounted for in the national revenues, adding that such transactions include unre-

ported sources of income, illegal economic transactions like smuggling, people involved in illicit and illegal trading in such merchandise like drugs and unlicensed weapons, in addition to bribery and other forms of corruption and other means of dodging taxation.

Smuggling, in its different forms, is considered as the most notorious in black economy activities and one which is being combated by most world nations, according to the minister who said smuggling is one way of avoiding paying tax, with most harmful consequences to the state treasury and with negative impact on social security because smuggling is often coupled with organised crime.

Referring to the situation in Jordan, Mr. Jardaneh said that black economy mainly shows in the sale of smuggled electric appliances and scents which are sold at far lower rates than those in the stores.

He said that employers giving work to non-Jordanians without reporting this to the employment offices with the purpose of avoiding payments of work permit fees is also a form of black economy.

Mr. Jardaneh said that assessing the extent of black economy in Jordan and other countries is still a novelty and involves a great deal of controversy and is highly argumentative since such assessment is made against the total volume of the national economy and in addition to the

# Clinton signs emergency spending bill, keeps U.S. government open

WASHINGTON (R) — Beating a midnight (0500 GMT) deadline, President Bill Clinton signed an emergency spending bill Friday night to keep the federal government open through March 15, the White House said.

"I'm pleased that the Congress avoided another partial government shutdown and I appreciate its bipartisan approach to this bill," Mr. Clinton said in a written statement.

The Senate approved the measure late Friday by a vote of 82-8 after defeating Democratic amendments to raise the U.S. credit limit and add money for education.

The House passed the temporary spending bill on Thursday on a strong bipar-

ty vote of 371-42. Much of the government is working under short-term spending which ran out at midnight (0500 GMT).

Republicans called the bill a "downpayment" on the deficit, but with their leaders saying all hope of a seven-year balanced budget deal with the White House was off, the bill merely postponed debate over large budget issues.

The accord on this spending bill also showed Republicans recognised failure of a strategy which forced two government shutdowns in an unsuccessful attempt to gain leverage over Mr. Clinton on spending cuts and policy changes.

"We did the wrong strategy. That's okay. We



Bill Clinton

tried, it didn't work. Now we've got to be smarter," said House Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich, an Ohio Republican.

As part of deal to keep the government open for another seven weeks, the president had accepted the Republicans' proposed deep cuts in federal programmes ranging from housing and the environmental protection agency to foreign aid.

Reflecting a new conciliatory spirit on the budget which emerged after Mr. Clinton's State of the Union address on Tuesday, Congress agreed to the full fiscal 1996 spending of \$12.1 billion for foreign aid. This frees \$5.1 billion in economic and military aid to Egypt and Israel.

To resolve the politically thorny issue of abortion, the White House agreed to a ban on federally funded scientific research using human embryos.

At the same time Republicans accepted funding for U.S. aid to international family planning programmes

that provide abortions. However, the money would not likely flow until July and would be cut 35 per cent.

The bill orders the sale of a House of Representatives office building and of seven million barrels of oil from the strategic petroleum reserve, worth \$100 million. It increases the size of federally funded Pell College grants to \$2,440 per student and cuts \$1.2 billion from housing programmes.

During Friday's debate, the Senate rejected on a vote of 45-46 a Democratic proposal to raise the debt limit to \$5.4 trillion from the current \$4.9 trillion.

Raising the debt ceiling is set to become the next budget flashpoint in late February, because Republicans intend it to carry the weight for their political and economic agenda.

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin warned Congress the government will run out of borrowing power by March 1 and may not be able to send out social security checks unless they act to increase the credit line. Congress is to adjourn at the end of next week and will have no opportunity to act until it returns on Feb. 26.

The Senate also defeated an amendment offered by several Democratic and Republican senators which sought to boost education spending by \$3.1 billion through March 15. After the vote they said they would continue to press to restore a 25 per cent cut from education spending.

The strong votes in both chambers showed rank-and-file Republicans were not anxious to repeat the three-week shutdown that occurred over the Christmas holidays. A shorter shutdown had preceded that in November.

# China says corruption on rise among officials

BEIJING (R) — China's top graft-buster has claimed spectacular successes in the battle against corruption in 1995 but said economic crimes were on the rise among Communist Party and government officials.

The fight against corruption in 1996 would see new attempts to boost supervisory mechanisms within the party, Wei Jianxing, head of the party's Central Disciplinary Inspection Commission told a commission meeting.

Among the new directives to senior party and government officials was an order to prevent spouses, children and colleagues from involvement in corrupt practices," Mr. Wei said.

Nepotism, abuse of power and corruption have proliferated in China in recent years as far-reaching economic reforms have opened up loopholes for officials to use their influence to make money and benefit friends and relatives.

Last year's crackdown on corruption, a campaign driven by warnings from president and party chief Jiang Zemin that graft threatened 46 years of party rule, claimed notable successes, Mr. Wei said.

The decision to purge former Beijing party chief Chen Xitong after the suicide of vice mayor Wang Baosen amid a \$37 million corruption investigation was "especially spectacular," said Mr. Wei — who replaced Mr. Chen as Beijing municipal party boss last May.

In the first 11 months of

# Israel sees trade with Thailand doubling soon

BANGKOK (R) — Israel has offered virtually unlimited loan guarantees to Thailand in order to increase trade, officials said.

Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, who was in Thailand last week for talks with senior officials, announced the formation of a joint economic committee to lay the groundwork for enhanced economic cooperation between the two nations.

Mr. Shohat said in an interview he expects bilateral trade to double within two to three years.

Israeli exports to Thailand totalled \$250 million in 1995, while its imports from Thailand amounted to \$150 million, an Israeli embassy official said.

Mr. Shohat also said Israel would grant credit guarantees for exports to Thailand. He originally announced a \$100 million figure for the guarantees.

"If more than \$100 million is required we will cover that. If less is required then it will be less than \$100 million. \$100 million is just a number to start from," said Dov Geva at the Israeli embassy in Thailand.

Mr. Shohat was in Thailand as part of an Asian tour to "expose Israel" to the region, which currently accounts for only 15 per cent of Israel's exports.

# Arab Gulf states to renew search for customs union

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states will renew a bid this year to iron out differences on plans to set up a customs union that will pave the way for a long-sought common market, an official report has said.

The six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states were to announce an agreement on customs unification in 1995 but their heads of state failed to endorse the project and asked the finance ministers to try again.

Officials said GCC leaders, who held their 15th annual summit in Muscat in December, did not approve the project because of differences over the level of the single tariff and insistence by some members on protectionism.

The GCC finance and economy ministers will meet in mid 1996 to "agree on plans to unify customs tariffs on foreign imports in line with the economic accord that called for a common market."

According to a report by the Dammam-based GCC Chambers' Union, received here, "The customs union is still facing the same obstacles," it said. "The level of duties and protection measures vary from one member to another."

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Emirates (UAE) — have been haggling over unification of their tariffs on foreign imports for nearly eight years in line with their 1983 economic pact.

The pact, approved two years after they created their political, defence and economic alliance, also provided for linking their stock markets and aligning currencies as a prelude for a common Gulf market.

The large gap in customs duties in member states has blocked an agreement with their main economic partner, the European Union, to set up a free trade zone that could give regional states greater access to European markets.

Officials have spoken about a compromise of eight to 10 per cent, midway between the high tariffs in such mem-

bers as Saudi Arabia and Bahrain and low duties in the UAE. But differences persisted over the classification of the imported items to be taxed or exempted.

A customs union in the GCC could give birth to one of the biggest consumer markets in the world, with imports of more than \$50 billion a year and a gross domestic product of over \$200 billion.

It will also produce the biggest oil bloc in history, with production of one fifth of the global output and reserves of around 45 per cent of the world's.

"Customs unification will widen and activate the GCC market, encourage transit trade, reduce the stock of foreign products and create a suitable environment for upgrading productivity," the Chambers' Union said.

# HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 1996

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) You have new interests which require your early attention, but after lunch do not disagree with one who vacillates.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Get into practical affairs and handle them from a new angle. Avoid an argument with one who is over-anxious financially.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Listen more carefully and know what your partners expect of you. Don't be forceful with your own ideas.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) Get into the tasks ahead of you in a direct fashion and put aside worries. Tonight gab about town and have a fine time.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Make plans to get your finest talent across to others. Don't permit a friend to waste your time in completing a new project.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) You have an opportunity to get at some new improvement at home which will please all there. You can do whatever will please a close tie.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Show your partners that you value them highly and come to a fine understanding. Be more positive in handling correspondence.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Delve right into monetary and practical affairs early today, and don't permit a slow-poke to deter your progress.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Anything which interests you can be gained today by being very direct in going after it for you to succeed.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Get busy planning just how to gain your fondest wishes today and later tonight. Show that you are generous and kind.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Be more thoughtful of friends since they hold the key to your advancement today. Be careful in motion and in speech.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) This is a day to see bigwigs and get their support and then to handle community wisely. Be more efficient.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

# THE Daily Crossword by William Canine

ACROSS

- Guardianship
- Up
- Cruising
- Field
- Bing about
- Goddess of Norse myth
- Detroit's nasal telephone operator
- Tiny insect
- Garment maker
- Thrives
- Disdains
- Actor Ron
- An effort to realize an aim
- Kind of sandwich
- Insignia
- Actress
- Eleonora of old
- Fountain treat
- Baba
- Superficial
- St.
- Shipshape
- Songwriter Paul
- Dark wood
- Pleasant
- Tomb, for one
- At all
- Begrudged
- Adriatic port
- Moves furively
- Slipper
- Magnum of
- Pianist Myra
- Mail
- "— homo"
- Orient
- Cake ingredient
- Buck

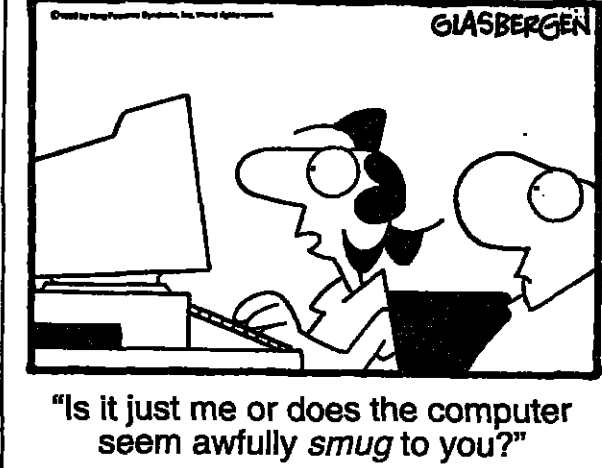
DOWN

- Whitman or Disney
- Cavatina's kin
- Souvenir
- From sunup to sundown
- Nuts
- Head cover
- Onion
- Site of Bhutan
- Pavilion
- Devotional prayer
- Detroit's entertainer-politico
- Notable times
- Pangolin idiom
- Whigs' opponent
- Pipe joint
- Khartoum's
- Mopes
- Vintage car
- Delightful place
- Dark blue
- Kick
- Sheltered
- Supreme
- Detroit?
- Quench
- Holbrook
- Curculio
- Least
- Curbs
- Voice vote
- Put in
- Choose
- Old record label
- "—Team" (TV show)
- Remain
- Sped
- Austen heroine
- Keel part
- Pronoun
- Help!

Yesterday's puzzle solved

R	I	O	S	S	L	A	P	S	T	R	O	T
A	C	I	L	I	C	A	B	A	L	R	E	M
N	E	E	R	O	N	E	I	G	A	A	R	E
G	R	O	V	I	E	R	C	L	I	E	V	E
I	D	E	E	D	E	N	S					
H	E	A	V	E				E	R	S	E	
E	L	L	A		C	O	O	L	I	E	L	A
M	I	L	L	I	A	R	D	F	I	L	L	M
S	A	Y		T	O	A	T	E	E	A	N	T
G	O	W	S					A	N	G	E	R
S	E	E	N					P	A	C	E	
R	U	T	H	E	R	F	O	R	D	H	A	Y
A	I	G	U	E		A	L	G	I	D		T
F	A	D	S			T	I	R	I	O	L	E
T	R	E	T			S	T	E	R	E		R

# THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



# JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DIPEW

MOFUR

RAZTUQ

KOECIO

Now arrange the dried letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A

Saturday's Jumbles: RHYME BUILT FLAUNT TURPID  
Answer: What the fight bulb gave young Edison — A "BRIGHT" FUTURE

# THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

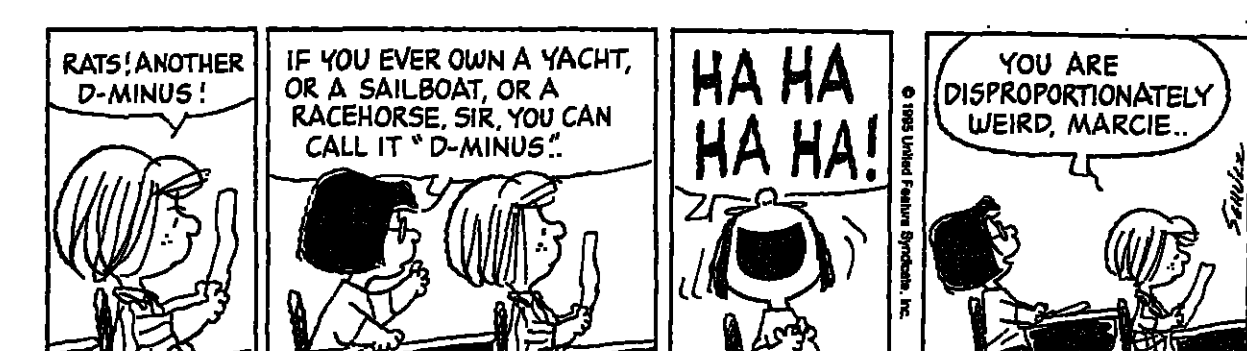
Wow—that was fast!

WHAT THE GUN-FIGHTER TURNED ARTIST WAS CONSIDERED.

Now arrange the dried letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

# Peanuts



# Andy Capp



# Mutt'n'Jeff





# Gold roars to 5-year peak

LONDON (R) — Gold soared to a five-year peak Friday, reaching its highest level since the 1991 Gulf crisis, and the dollar rebounded from earlier losses against the mark when the market decided worries over European monetary union were overdone.

Bullion hit its highest level since Sept. 28, 1990, during the day but ended \$1.15 down from its Thursday close, in what the market regarded as a predictable correction after some profit-taking.

Dealers said the correction was healthy and the bull run could carry on next week past the levels seen in the panic following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

The metal had been lifted overnight by continued

strong speculative buying in the Far East, especially in Tokyo, where yen-priced gold futures have been booming. The present rally began with good jewellery demand in Asia and falling supply.

"It's onwards and upwards. The (investment) funds are having a wonderful time with it and driving the price higher," said Ted Arnold, metals analyst with Merrill Lynch Financial Services.

"Getting to \$420 looks possible and people are talking of even higher numbers," he added. Gold has advanced by about 5.5 per cent since the start of this year after languishing between \$370 and \$390 for most of 1995.

Meanwhile, the dollar ended up against the mark, just

below its 1996 high, on market confidence that European interest rate cuts would be deeper than in the United States and after European Union (EU) officials dismissed a press report of an imminent postponement of European economic and monetary union (EMU).

Earlier, fears that some countries would not meet the Maastricht criteria for a single European currency and signs of political unrest in France and Italy made the mark something of a safe haven, its resurgence blunting the dollar's rally.

But EU officials, finance ministers and central bankers mounted a full scale attack against renewed market scepticism over EMU plans.

## Cement company profits JD 17m in 1995

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Cement Factories Company (JCFC) Friday reported that 1995 exports of cement to Palestinian self-rule areas amounted to 17,000 tonnes. The company is targeting 400,000 tonnes of exports in 1996 in view of reconstruction programmes planned in Palestinian territories.

According to JCFC General Manager Hatem Halawani 1995 profits were JD 17 million.

Mr. Halawani said that in 1995 JCFC sold 2.682 million tonnes of cement on the local Jordanian market and 708,000 tonnes were exported to other countries. He explained that the company exports cement only when the local markets have acquired their needs.

Mr. Halawani said that exports in 1996 could rise to 913,000 tonnes because arrangements have been made for boosting overall production to 3.5 million tonnes, to rise by 1998 to 4.5 million tonnes annually.

According to Mr. Halawani, cement exports mainly go to Asian markets — Thailand, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore — and some Arab states, noting that exports are shipped via Aqaba port where the company's warehouses can load on board vessels up to 8,000 tonnes of cement on a daily basis.

Referring to the company's development since its foundation in 1951, Mr. Halawani said that production which began in 1954 at the rate of 86,000 tonnes annually has now increased by 34 times, adding that the Jordanian cement has been proved by various standards to be one of the best in quality.

From a JD 1 million capital in 1951, added Mr. Halawani, the company now boasts JD 60 million in capital and assets noting that the company employs 2,590, all of them Jordanian nationals.

## UAE, U.S. set to launch major offset ship venture

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the United States are set to launch one of the region's biggest ship-building ventures after covering more than eight times the initial capital, owners said Saturday.

Subscriptions have closed for the Abu Dhabi Shipbuilding Company (ADSC), owned partly by the U.S. shipbuilders Newport News, and a board meeting will be held next month to announce its creation.

The first half of the capital was oversubscribed in less than a month.

"The public rush to invest in the company reflects abundant liquidity in the market and investors' confidence in the company due to government participation," said Zuhair Kaswani, a leading UAE stockbroker.

In an announcement published in the local press Saturday, ADSC said it had floated shares worth 36 million dirhams (\$9.8 million) last month and a similar amount would be sold to the public next December.

It said there were more than 22,400 subscribers, investing nearly 315 million dirhams (\$85.8 million), in the floated shares, valued at 10 dirhams (\$2.72) each.

The announcement said investment by each subscriber would be cut to the allowed minimum level of 300 dirhams (\$81.7) and the remaining subscribed capital would be distributed proportionately. The over-subscribed funds would be returned to the investors.

"The founding committee invites shareholders for a meeting of the general assembly on Feb. 27 to hear reports on measures taken to establish the company and

announce its formal establishment," it said.

The first assembly meeting will also approve the appointment of member board of directors, headed by Sheikh Hazza Al Nahayan, son of UAE president Sheikh Zayed Ibn Sultan Al Nahayan.

Newport News, one of the biggest shipbuilding firms in the world, owns 40 per cent and the UAE government has 18.5 per cent of ADSC's capital of 175 million dirhams (\$47.68 million). The rest is held by the private sector.

The U.S. company had offered the pre-offset shipyard project in the hope it will be awarded a multi-billion-dollar contract to supply the UAE navy with frigates as part of the Gulf country's plans to bolster its army.

Under offset programmes introduced by the UAE a few years ago, world arms suppliers must reinvest in local projects capable of producing up to 60 per cent of the value of the weapon deal over 10 years. But some companies have started to offer know-how in joint ventures ahead of arms contracts to lure authorities into selecting them.

The UAE and other Gulf states hope offset projects will help them acquire industrial technology needed to diversify their economies and neutralise the effects of fluctuating oil prices.

ADSC, based in Musdaffah port near Abu Dhabi, will start by repairing and building small vessels this year, before broadening its activities to building medium ships and oil rigs as well as manufacturing vessels and shipping equipment for the armed forces.

## DAILY BUSINESS BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

### Central Bank sees time appropriate to introduce comprehensive banks' concept

★ WITH THE fundamental changes that resulted from the removal of barriers that faced the financial and banking services, the Central Bank considers the time appropriate to introduce the concept of comprehensive banking to the Jordanian banking stage, a senior Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) official has said. According to Ahmad Abdul Fattah, the CBJ's assistant governor, there are basic requirements that should be met before the Central Bank considers an application by a bank to operate as a comprehensive bank. He divided the requirements into two types: Financial and monetary on one hand and administrative, organisational and central on the other hand. Under the financial and monetary requirements the following terms should be met:

- 1) The paid-up-capital should not be less than JD 20 million.
- 2) The allowances for (bad or doubtful) debts or the portfolio of securities (for price fluctuations) should be sufficient.
- 3) The financial and monetary ratio imposed by the Central Bank should be strictly adhered to so as to ensure banking safety requirements in a comprehensive way.

The administrative, organisational and central requirements are:

- A) The availability of an efficient and capable management and qualified expertise to manage the new operations.
- B) The availability of solid internal audit regulations and the financial and administrative control measures along with qualified and efficient audit departments that are approved by the Central Bank.
- C) The availability of qualified human cadres in various specialties to shoulder the change in the quality and quantity of operations.
- D) The appointment of an audit committee from among the members of the board to study and analyse financial reports and to issue an opinion and a recommendation(s) about them before submitting these reports to the full board in an integrated form. This committee, which is a new system applied in some developed countries, must also develop a concept for the relationship that should exist between the internal and external auditors as well as between the executive management and the board of directors.

Mr. Abdul Fattah, explained that for investment banks to operate as comprehensive banks they will have the following functions added to their normal business:

- 1) Extending advances under current account facilities.
  - 2) Providing direct credit facilities for various periods and purposes.
  - 3) Opening letters of credits and issuing guarantees without any restriction.
  - 4) Any other transaction that the Central Bank may allow in the future.
  - 5) Financing all kinds of trade transactions.
- As for commercial banks they will be performing the following additional functions:
- A) Brokerage operations at the Amman Financial Market, either for their own accounts or for accounts of their clients, including managing a clients portfolio.
  - B) Managing and guaranteeing the coverage of issuing debentures or any other form of financial instruments that can be traded.
  - C) Promoting new investment opportunities including the preparation of economic and financial feasibility studies.
  - D) Providing financial leasing services.
  - E) Extending real estate financing.
  - F) Any other functions that the Central Bank may allow in the future.

Mufleh Agel, the executive manager of the Arab Bank, expects the comprehensive banking system to create an advanced capital market in Jordan, especially after the failure of investment banks to build such a strong market. Mr. Agel saw the Arab Bank and the Housing Bank as the two banks capable of implementing the concept of comprehensive banks and he predicted that there will be five comprehensive banks in Jordan over the coming two years. (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 27/01/1996				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	NEW CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	2825	5877	2.540	2.650
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK/NEW	2830	6510	2.510	2.460
THE HOUSING BANK	828	3923	4.750	4.780
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	354	959	2.750	2.700
JORDAN GULF BANK	3950	3909	1.060	1.040
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	1000	3900	1.000	3.900
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	3087	11417	3.670	3.720
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	300	1058	3.520	3.540
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	9507	8931	1.850	1.850
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	1847	2424	1.350	1.310
BANKS SECTOR	26566	51807	INDEX NUMBER: 185.76	CHANGE: -0.02%
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	665	1813	2.730	2.690
INSURANCE SECTOR	665	1813	INDEX NUMBER: 128.95	CHANGE: -0.19%
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	11869	19938	1.680	1.680
TRIED DISTRICTION ELECTRICITY	180	192	1.260	1.260
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	690	1053	1.620	1.620
MACHINERY EQUIP. RENTING & MAINTENANCE	2900	1800	1.710	1.720
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	250	530	2.140	2.120
ARAB TRAVEL FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	1500	5139	3.450	3.450
ZARQA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	2500	2989	1.200	1.170
UNION LAND DEVELOPMENT CORP.	250	233	950	930
SERVICES SECTOR	19792	32273	INDEX NUMBER: 125.58	CHANGE: -0.18%
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	12382	44346	3.580	3.590
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	2588	25258	9.750	9.720
THE INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	150	533	3.880	3.350
THE JORDAN WORTHER MILLS	300	2285	7.850	7.500
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	650	2893	4.550	4.450
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	100	620	6.100	5.100
JORDAN ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES	950	5268	5.450	5.440
LIPTON & PHARMACY	8750	4800	5.550	5.550
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	2700	3726	1.390	1.380
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	750	728	980	970
INTERMEDIATE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES	2450	3596	1.450	1.420
JORDAN ROYAL INDUSTRIES	1500	1470	990	900
NATIONAL CHEM. & WIRE MANUFACTURING	250	900	3.600	3.600
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	950	1570	1.670	1.650
RAJFERR INVESTMENT	950	1472	2.550	1.550
OLIVIERA MODERN INDUSTRIES	250	2961	3.150	3.140
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	1450	2700	1.850	1.850
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	3450	4673	1.350	1.350
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	1450	1568	1.350	1.350
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	42720	111616	INDEX NUMBER: 121.10	CHANGE: -0.08%
GRAND TOTAL	89703	197508	INDEX NUMBER: 152.41	CHANGE: -0.04%
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	91154			
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET	58972			

## McDonald's profits \$1.4b

OAK BROOK, Illinois (R) — McDonald's Corp. has reported record fourth-quarter and full-year 1995 results and said it expects to perform even better this year as it steps up its global expansion. The fast-food giant's net income rose to \$366.8 million in the quarter ended Dec. 31 from \$308.9 million in the year-ago period. Systemwide sales at company-owned and franchised golden arches restaurants increased to \$7.7 billion from almost \$7.0 billion, while its own revenues grew to \$2.6 billion from \$2.3 billion. For all of 1995, McDonald's profits rose 17 per cent to \$1.4 billion from \$1.2 billion in 1994. Systemwide sales jumped to \$29.9 billion from almost \$26.0 billion, while total revenues increased 18 per cent to almost \$10.0 billion from \$8.3 billion a year earlier.

## JORDAN MARKET PLACE

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## Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 25/1/96	New York Close Date 26/1/96
Sterling Pound	1.5085	1.5035
Deutsche Mark	1.4890	1.4915
Swiss Franc	1.1975	1.2107
French Franc	5.1075	5.1345
Japanese Yen	106.85	106.63

\* USD Per STD

## Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 27/1/1996

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0657	1.0690
Deutsche Mark	0.4747	0.4771
Swiss Franc	0.5845	0.5872
French Franc	0.1577	0.1584
Japanese Yen	0.0055	0.0065
Dutch Guilder	0.4234	0.4255
Swedish Krona	*****	*****
Italian Lira	0.0443	0.0445
Belgian Franc	*****	*****

\* Per 100

## Other Currencies Date: 27/1/1996

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.6620	1.6780
Lebanese Lira	0.0441	0.0445
Saudi Riyal	0.1870	0.1895
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3070	2.3670
Qatari Riyal	0.1932	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2100	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.8320	1.8410
UAE Dirham	0.1922	0.1933
Greek Drachma	0.2890	0.3000
Cypriot Pound	1.8400	1.4950



# Seles crowns comeback with Open title

## Rubin, Sanchez team up to win doubles title

MELBOURNE (Agencies) — A proud father's tears captured the emotional crowning of Monica Seles' tennis comeback at the Australian Open on Saturday far more than her brilliant victory on centre court.

And her breaking down later at a news conference when questioned about the stabbing by a crazed Steffi

think about that." Seles' one regret in her victory was the absence of old adversary and joint world number one Steffi Graf, absent after surgery on an injured foot.

"I definitely would have liked Steffi to be here," said Seles, who lost to Graf in an emotionally-charged U.S. Open final, her second com-

start building something and it knocks me back down again," Seles said last week.

"Finally I got rid of my knee (tendonitis) carried into the U.S. Open) and then I go to San Francisco and I sprain my ankle and tear my ligaments and (have) another four and a half weeks off and slowly build back up," Seles said.

"Then I start practising again after my ankle injury and the hospital decided I have terrible blood works and it is one thing after the other," she added.

Her "blood works" turned out to be a virus which made her tired and which again needed treatment.

But she was able to put thoughts of injury behind her as she basked in her victory at the open.

"Coming back here in '96 and doing so well in really the first try has been very emotional for me... it's very special."

### Rubin, Sanchez win

The two women who fought out the longest women's singles match yet seen in the Australian Open teamed up here Saturday to grab the women's doubles title.

Unseeded Chanda Rubin of the U.S. and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain beat the third seeded U.S. pair



World No. 1 Monica Seles of the U.S. (right) and Germany's Anke Huber pose during the trophy presentation ceremony at the Australian Open (Reuters photo)

We're definitely looking into it."

This is Rubin's first Grand Slam title.

"It feels great. I want some more," she said.

They came from behind to take the first set and seized Davenport's first serve going wild.

In the third set, Rubin's forehands and volleys broke Davenport in the fifth to give the unseeded pair a 4-1 lead.

But the experienced Davenport and Fernandez reeled off the next three games, breaking both Sanchez Vicario and Rubin, only to see Davenport lose her service when Fernandez volleyed into the net.

Leading 5-4, Sanchez Vicario served for title, but the American pair held two break points before they lost when both Fernandez and Davenport netted their shots.

The marathon clash has made the pair two of the most popular players at the Open and the centre court crowd cheered their win.

"It was disappointing to lose in the singles... It's nice to leave winning a trophy," said Rubin.

Eventual champion Monica Seles made a dramatic recovery in the semi-finals to

a centre court final looked as grim as he did last week after a second round singles exit, clenched his fists with joy after he and Kordan beat Canadian Sebastian Lareau and American Alex O'Brien 7-5, 7-5, 4-6, 6-1.

The Swede, 30 last Friday, and on his final tour before retirement, threw a ball high into the gallery where thousands stood to applaud the six times Grand Slam singles champion off the court.

Among them were his faithful supporters, the blue and yellow face-painted Swedes, who finally had something to cheer about in this tournament after the failure of their new hero, Thomas Enqvist, to reach the singles semifinals.

"I'd like to thank all the fans that have been coming out here throughout my career and I've had great support here, probably better than all the other places in the world," Edberg said in his victory speech.

"Thanks a lot and I'm going to miss you," Edberg said before his humbling singles defeat to French qualifier Jean-Philippe Fleurian that he still hoped for another Grand Slam title before retiring, but

beat Rubin who was leading at one stage 5-2 in the deciding set and was only two points from victory.

Arantxa Sanchez won the doubles title last year with Czech player Jana Novotna.

Edberg on high note

Former world No. 1 Stefan Edberg said his final goodbye to the Australian Open on a victorious note on Saturday when he and Czech partner Petr Kordan won the men's doubles final.

Edberg, whose chances of

# Chang, Becker hungry for more Grand Slam glory

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Smart Asian money may be on speedy Michael Chang to beat German great Boris Becker and win the Australian Open title here Sunday, but Andre Agassi and the record books are backing Becker.

The 28-year-old German has won three of their four encounters including the ATP finals last year, and Chang has taken only two of the 10 sets they have played.

They have met before in only one Grand Slam, a quarter final at the 1991 French Open, which Becker won in straight sets.

Both Hunger for more Grand Slam glory.

Chang became the youngest player — at 17 years three months — to take the French Open title in 1989 and has not won a major since.

Ten years ago, Becker was the youngest winner — at 17 years seven months — at Wimbledon.

Yet he has gone on to win four other titles, the last one being here in 1991.

The 23-year-old Chang has had a flawless lead up to the final and has not dropped a set here. He came to Flinders Park after winning all of his four exhibition matches at the local Kooyong Classic.

In the semi-finals he brushed aside a lethargic defending champion and second seed Andre Agassi in straight sets.

The American-Chinese is renowned for his mobility and brilliant retrievals. He has also added a more potent serve and improved his ground strokes after he found he was being hurt by the power players.

He says his form is as good as it has ever been and Asian money is on their champion Chang to win.

"Tennis is still a thinking man's game. There is a lot of talk of power taking over tennis, and still strategy... is always there," Chang said this week.

In Becker he will be up against one of the finest serve-volley specialists in the business as the German showed when he blitzed Australian left-hander, Mark Woodforde in the semi-finals.

"Boris has a game that can take Chang's speed out of the equation to a certain degree. When he's holding (serve) he's good enough to beat anybody," Agassi said.

Becker, who has accumulated 44 titles in his 12 years on the circuit, will be playing

in his 10th Grand Slam singles final.

He ended a slump by reaching last year's Wimbledon final — his first in four years — where he lost to Pete Sampras, and the semi-finals in the following U.S. Open.

Chang was seeded fifth here, one rung below Becker, and if he wins it would be the longest stretch between winning Grand Slam titles in the open era.

In his last Grand Slam, the U.S. Open, he reached the quarter finals.

The German said that he had been "very much" impressed by Chang's performance here so far.

"He really took control early in all the matches and didn't give anybody a chance... he's in excellent form," Becker said.

Chang described Becker a "great competitor," saying he is a "very, very talented player, an all-court player and quite capable of beating all of us."

Woodforde was more effusive. After his semi-final loss, the articulate Australian said: "Boris had probably one of those days where God could have been up the other end and he still would have beaten him pretty easily."

### Biographies of Open finalists

#### \* Boris Becker (Germany)

Age: 28

Seeded: Four

Career official prize money: U.S. \$19.5 million

Singles titles: Five Grand Slam titles, 44 overall.

Coach: Mike Delpalmer since August 1995. Formerly Nick Bollettieri.

Grand Slam record: Won Wimbledon in 1985, 1986 and 1989, the U.S. Open in 1989 and the Australian Open in 1991.

Route to the final: Beat Greg Rusedski (Britain) 6-4, 3-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3. Thomas Johansson (Sweden) 4-6, 3-6, 6-2, 6-1, 6-4. Magnus Larsson (Sweden) 7-6, (7-5), 6-3, 6-3. Brett Steven (New Zealand) 1-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-2. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Russia) 6-4, 7-6, (11-9), 6-1. Mark Woodforde (Australia) 6-4, 6-2, 6-0.

Playing style: One of the greatest fighters on the circuit, Becker has shown great concentration and creativity to work himself out of the tightest corners. A powerful right-hander with one of the best serves in the game, he is a formidable player, especially indoors. His prowess as a volleyer makes him very difficult to pass.

Personal: Married with a two-year-old son, Becker admits his priority in recent years has not always been tennis. But five years without a Grand Slam title has sharpened his appetite for the game. Born in Leimen on November 22, 1967, Becker took up tennis aged 12 and now enjoys almost cult status in his home country.

#### Michael Chang (United States)

Age: 23

Seeded: Five

Career official prize money: U.S. \$11.7 million.

Singles titles: One Grand Slam title, 23 overall.

Coach: His older brother, Carl.

Grand Slam record: Won French Open in 1989.

Route to the final: Beat David Rikl (Czech Republic) 6-2, 6-1, 6-2. Jakob Hlasek (Switzerland) 6-1, 6-3, 6-3. Guillaume Raoux (France) 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (8-6). Jean-Philippe Fleurian (France) 6-2, 6-3, 6-4. Mikael Tillstrom (Sweden) 6-0, 6-2, 6-4. Andre Agassi (U.S.) 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 (7-1).

Playing style: Known for his lightning court speed, Chang is renowned for chasing down balls other players would not even dream of retrieving. Chang, a small player often outgunned by bigger opponents, has developed a longer racquet to give him more power and reach and now has a booming serve as quick as any of the top players.

Personal: A devout Christian, Chang believes his career follows a divine path and that he will only win on Sunday with God's blessing. The American-born son of ethnic Chinese, he has a strong attachment to Asia where he plays more tournaments than his peers and enjoys strong support. He was introduced to the game by his father, Joe, and now supports grassroots tennis in Asia through his "stars of the future" programme in Hong Kong and the Asia-wide "Reebok Challenge". He has a great-grandmother who still lives in Guangzhou, southern China.

# Deion fits in with flashy Cowboys

TEMPE, Arizona (R) — Last year as a member of the Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers, Deion Sanders stood out like a high-priced hooker in a convent.

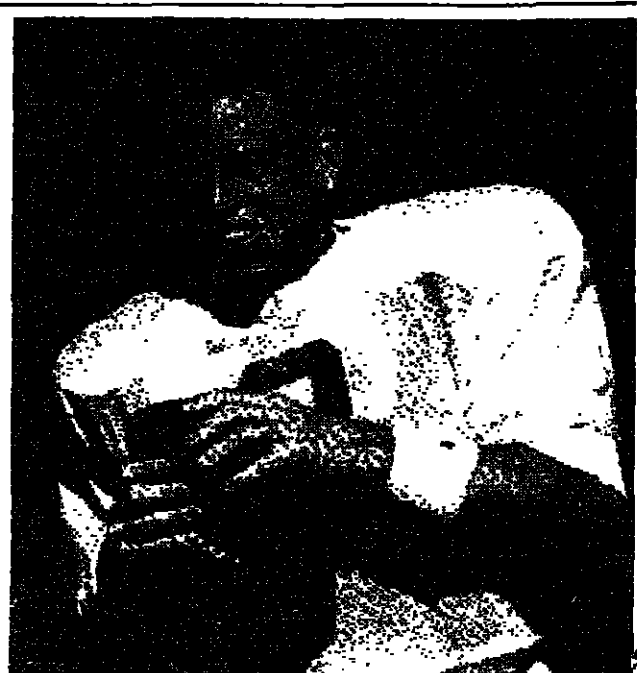
As the newest member of the talent-Dallas Cowboys, however, the two-sport star known as "prime time" fits right in. He's just another guy with ostentatious jewelry, gaudy transportation, a love of the spotlight and a flare for the flashy.

"It's a beautiful circus over here, we got something better than Ringling Barnum and Bailey Circus," said Sanders, who will be playing in his second consecutive Super Bowl Sunday.

Sanders would not compare the talent or confidence levels of the two teams, but he is enjoying himself far more this time around and feels truly accepted by the Cowboys after playing with a group of athletes he believed resented his style and high profile.

"This is great, man. It's so much sweeter. My teammates make it better for me, they really do," he said.

"They're a great bunch, they're a great group — no hatred, no animosity, no



Dallas Cowboys quarterback Troy Aikman smiles as he warms up during an afternoon practice in preparation for the Super Bowl. Dallas meets Pittsburgh in Super Bowl XXX on Sunday (Reuters photo)

jealously, no envy.

"I'm having a lot of fun. We joke 24 hours a day. There's not a dull moment."

The 49ers could be spectacular on the field. But the franchise has a reputation for being conservative and very businesslike. None of those terms can be used to describe these Dallas Cowboys.

"This team has a better personality," observes Sanders.

What Dallas has is the personality of its owner, Jerry Jones — filthy rich, rebel,

lious, a keen sense of personal marketing and an insatiable desire for celebrity.

Sanders is also thriving under Barry Switzer's easy going coaching style.

"Barry's a good dude. He's truly a player's coach."

That is apparent from the team's loose attitude the entire week leading up to Super Bowl XXX against the Pittsburgh Steelers.

"We know how late to stay out and we know when to get in," he said of the team's pre-Super Bowl activities.

### GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAR HIRSCH  
21394 Tribune Media Services Inc.

#### WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AAJ92 772 CAJ1063 AK8

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1 2 3 4

What do you bid now?

Q. 2 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AQ10932 K98 CAJ93 AQ

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

1A Pass 1A Pass

INT Pass ?

What do you bid now?

Q. 3 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

44 K105 CAQ1093 AAQ95

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1 2 3 4

What do you bid now?

Q. 4 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

AAK973 CAQ9 CJ92 AS

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1 2 3 4

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1A Pass 2C

What do you bid now?

Q. 5 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKQ KQJ10963 AK7 AS

Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond?

Q. 6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AKJ76 CAKJ83 AKQ7 AS

Partner opens the bidding with four spades. What action do you take?

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Pierce Brosnan as James Bond 007 in GOLDENEYE		POCAHONTAS Shows: 12:30, 2:15 p.m. Sylvester Stallone...in JUDGE DREDD Shows: 6:45, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD "1" * ACE VENTURA "2" CONCORD "2" Street Fighter Shows: 12:30, 2:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Nadia Al Jundi, Farouq Fishawi, and Mahmoud Hamida in The Woman that Shook the Throne of Egypt (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	"Ahlan Tatbie" play Welcome Normalisation Shows: 8:30 p.m. For reservation call 625155



## Suns, Bulls, Pacers win

AST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (R) — Kendall Gill poured in a season-high 31 points against the team at traded him one week ago the New Jersey Nets held for a 115-107 victory over the Charlotte Hornets Friday.

Kenny Anderson, the her key player in the trade, at eight points and 15 assists at Charlotte.

"We needed a win, we needed it because we are going on a west coast swing," Gill said. "I knew what plays we were going to run." "I was loose, I played a good floor game," Anderson said. "They didn't want me to come in here and beat them, understand that. They play hard and aggressive. They say that way every night. I wish them all the best of luck, I have no bad feelings toward anybody in the organization."

Armon Gilliam had 22 points and 11 rebounds while J. Brown added 18 points for New Jersey, which had at three of its previous four games but has won all three outings with Charlotte this season.

"We knew Kenny wanted to come in here and have a game. We didn't want to take it personal," Gilliam said.

"We knew his game, we've seen it for five years. We just wanted to take him out of his time. We kept our composure. It was a good test for us."

Glen Rice scored 34 points and Dell Curry had 19 for the Hornets, who were out-rebounded 53-36.

In a Seattle, Gary Payton scored 24 points and drove fast-to-coast for the winning jump with 10 seconds left, tying the SuperSonics to a 1-93 thriller over the Utah Jazz.

In Philadelphia, Cedric Ceballos had 31 points and rebounds and the Los Angeles Lakers used a 19-7 run in the opening five minutes to cruise to a 100-88 win over the 76ers, extending their losing streak to eight games.

In Milwaukee, Charles Barkley recorded 20 points and 15 rebounds to lead the Phoenix Suns to their 10th straight win over the Bucks, 77-91.



Vancouver Grizzlies' Greg Anthony jumps high in the air attempting to block Toronto Raptors' Damon Stoudamire from passing to the basket during the first quarter of their game at Skydome (Reuters photo)

In Atlanta, Mookie Blaylock had 21 points and 11 assists and keyed a fourth-quarter run as the Hawks rallied for their 10th consecutive win, 96-84 over the Orlando Magic.

Shaquille O'Neal had 20 points and 10 rebounds, Dennis Scott scored 19 points and Penny Hardaway had 16 for Orlando, which played without injured Horace Grant for the eighth straight game and fell to 9-11 on the road.

At Golden State, Latrell Sprewell scored 26 points as the Warriors held off the Sacramento Kings 124-118.

In Boston, Derrick McKey scored 23 points and Reggie Miller 23 as the Indiana Pacers whipped the Celtics 107-90 for their fifth straight victory. In Chicago, Michael Jor-

dan scored 25 points as the Bulls matched a franchise record with their 14th straight victory, 102-80 over the Miami Heat.

Scottie Pippen and Toni Kukoc added 17 apiece for the Bulls, who are 21-0 at home this season and extended their team-record home winning streak to 28 games.

Miami has lost seven consecutive road games and nine of its last 11 overall.

In San Antonio, Chuck Person scored 10 of his 21 points in the final seven minutes and snared a career-high 18 rebounds, and David Robinson had 20 points and a season-high 21 rebounds as the Spurs defeated the Portland Trail Blazers, 87-83.

### NBA RESULTS

Atlanta	96	Orlando	84
Indiana	107	Boston	90
New Jersey	115	Charlotte	107
LA Lakers	100	Philadelphia	88
Chicago	102	Miami	80
Phoenix	107	Milwaukee	97
San Antonio	87	Portland	83
Seattle	94	Utah	93
Golden State	124	Sacramento	118

## Women's downhill called off amid controversy

SESTRIERE, Italy (R) — A women's World Cup downhill was called off on Saturday after skiers said the course was dangerous and the race jury decided that problems could not be fixed in time for the event.

Organisers had hoped that they could hold both a training session and the race on the same day after bad weather earlier in the week had prevented any testing of the speedy new piste in this north Italian resort.

But the training run was abandoned by officials when the first 11 women down the course complained that one curve near the start was too tight and dangerous.

The decision to stop the race was bitterly contested by skier authorities who are hosting next year's World Championships and were using Saturday's race to unveil a new Downhill track, specially prepared for the 1997 competition.

Safety has been a key issue on the World Cup circuit since Austrian Ulrike Maier was killed in a downhill crash at the German resort of Garmisch in January 1994.

## Magic Johnson set to return to LA Lakers

LOS ANGELES (R) — In the latest twist in his on-again, off-again NBA career, Earvin "Magic" Johnson is talking to the Los Angeles Lakers about a possible comeback with the team he led to five championship titles, a Lakers spokesman said Friday.

The announcement came amid a swirl of speculation created by a New York Post report that Johnson, who retired in 1991 after testing positive for the virus that causes AIDS, has all but guaranteed he will return next week against the Chicago Bulls.

While declining to confirm the story, Lakers spokesman John Black told Reuters: "We've had discussions with him about coming back and we've had discussions with the league office about what is necessary for him to return."

Black said the Lakers are ready to satisfy all the league requirements "if and when" the former superstar point guard decides to emerge from retirement. That would include a firm condition that Johnson give up his 5 per cent ownership interest in the team.

Post columnist Peter Vecsey reported Friday that Johnson is ready to return to the National Basketball Association and that the team's lawyers have arranged for him to divest his share of the Lakers.

The story said Johnson's first game would be next Friday in Los Angeles, when the Lakers host the all-conquering Chicago Bulls led by another comeback story, Michael Jordan. Johnson's agent Jeff Jacobs declined comment on the report.

"We're prepared for him to return if he wants to," Black said in a telephone interview from Philadelphia, where the Lakers were scheduled to play the 76ers. "But we can't speak for him. It's his decision."

Johnson, who was in Phoenix for the Super Bowl, told Vecsey: "There's a lot to think

about. I'll let you know."

The 36-year-old Johnson, ranked among the greatest basketball players of all time, has openly flirted with the idea of an NBA comeback several times over the last five years.

But Johnson, who has been playing with his own touring All-Star team, touched off the latest wave of speculation when he started practising with the Lakers earlier this month. He told reporters he was just helping the team finetune its skills, but Vecsey said his true purpose was to gauge how well he would fit in.

Johnson stunned the sports world in November 1991 when he announced his retirement after contracting the HIV virus. But he returned to help the U.S. Olympic "dream team" to a gold medal in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

Six weeks before the start of the 1992-93 season he announced he was making a comeback. But just before opening night, he said he was retiring for good after several players expressed concern about the risks of competing against an HIV-infected player.

Johnson, who has shown no signs of having developed full-blown AIDS, coached the Lakers briefly at the end of the 1993-94 season but decided not to stay on for the following season.

"I have no idea how this will turn out," Lakers president Jerry West told Vecsey. "Earvin told me before the season he was going to play, then he didn't. But he's all pumped up again. He's 36. It's now or never."

Lakers coach Del Harris was quoted as saying he would love to have the 6-foot-9-inch (2.06 metres) Johnson on the team, which is in third place in the Pacific Division with a 22-18 record.

## African Nations' Cup S. Africa beat Algeria to reach semis

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — South Africa qualified for the African Nations' Cup semi-finals here on Saturday following an exciting 2-1 victory over Algeria.

Mark Fish scored first for South Africa, Tarek Lazizi equalised, before "Shoes" Moshoeu hit home the winner at the FNB stadium.

Midfielder Eric Tinkler set up the first goal with a cross from the right which had Algeria's defence in disarray in the 71st minute.

Both Leeds United's Phil Masinga and Wolverhampton Wanderers' Mark Williams missed the cross, before Fish beat three defenders and the goalkeeper to just poke the ball into the net at full stretch.

Algeria, who were happy to sit back and appeared to be playing for penalties, suddenly burst into action following the goal.

In the 84th minute, Lazizi rose above South Africa's defence from a Moussa Saib corner to head home and extra-time beckoned.

But while Algeria were still celebrating their equaliser, "Shoes" Moshoeu stole up-field and rifled a shot home for South Africa's winner.

Earlier Algerian keeper Mohamed Hanicheh saved a penalty a minute before half-time to keep the match 0-0 at the break.

Masinga was brought down



South African President Nelson Mandela (right) and World Footballer of the Year George Weah answer journalists during a meeting at Mandela's home with the Librarian Soccer Squad (Reuters photo)

in the 44th minute by central defender Mourad Slatni. But Doctor Khumalo's penalty was pushed round the left hand post by Hanicheh for the third penalty save of the tournament.

Both Ghana's Abedi Pele and teammate Frank Amankwa had had spotkicks stopped.

South Africa coach Clive Barker changed his formation to a 3-5-2, with Masinga's Leeds teammate Lucas Radebe keeping his place,

but midfielders Khumalo, Innocent "Iron Man" Buthelezi and Moshoeu coming in for Augustine Makalalane, Helman Mkalale and leftback David Nyathi.

Algeria coach Ali Fergani fielded Ali Mecabih, and not Said Kamel Kaci, who pulled a hamstring in the first match against Zambia, to partner Khaled Lounici up front.

Midfield stalemate led to no clear-cut chances till the 14th minute when Masinga had a 25-yard shot parried by

Hanicheh.

Though South Africa had much of the possession, Algeria's central defenders Mourad Slatni and Tarek Lazizi, comfortably repulsed the attacks.

Mark Fish went down injured in the 20th minute in a clash of knees with Mahidine Meftah to cause concern for coach Clive Barker. But Fish, who had been carried off on a stretcher, was soon back on.

## Russian puts Bonaly under pressure

OFIA (R) — The Russians finally have found a girl with the nerve as well as the talent necessary to win the European figure skating title. Irina Slutskaya, a petite figure skater from Moscow who will not be 17 until next month, is on the verge of exceeding where all other Soviet or Russian women have failed.

The European title can be won on Saturday if she can hold together the sort of long programme that vaulted her to the ranks at both the European and World Championships last year. She was 11th after the short programme last year,

then third best in the free skating which allowed her to finish fifth, a pattern she repeated at the world championships to place seventh.

This time she has produced a better short programme and lies second behind five-time champion and holder Surya Bonaly of France.

"I worked very hard to improve my short programme this year and tomorrow I'll be ever better than today," she promised.

Bonaly, 22, has her work cut out if she is to keep her title.

Behind Slutskaya is the revived Tanja Szewczenko of Germany, while another

Russian, the impressive Maria Butyrskaya, is fourth. Butyrskaya, 23, cannot be ruled out from the title hunt if she brings off the triple axel jump she has been attempting in practice.

In the last decade, Kira Ivanova, Anna Kondrasheva, Natalia Lebedeva and, last year, Olga Markova have all come close but second place has been the summit of their

achievements.

The ice dance title went to Russia on Friday for the umpteenth time then Oksana Grischuk and Evgeny Platov added it to the world and Olympic titles they already hold.

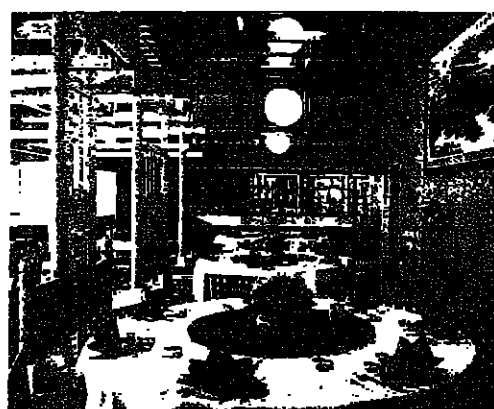
Afterwards Grischuk, 24, confirmed she and her partner planned to stay in competition until the Japan winter Olympics in Nagoya.

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## Jordan has a population of 4.13m - census

By Alia Toukan and Amy Henderson  
Jordan Times Staff Reporters

AMMAN — One year and one month following Jordan's 1994 population census, the first since 1979, the Department of Statistics released its long-awaited results originally scheduled to be completed by October of 1995.

Director General of the Department of Statistics Dr. Abdul Hadi Alawin defended the department against criticism that the disclosure of results was long overdue. "According to my knowledge, there have never been results finalised before a year and a half, and this includes any European country," he said.

Although preliminary statistics in December of 1994 showed the total population to be 4,095,579, final results showed it to be 4,139,458. Of these, 92.4 per cent are Jordanians with slightly more than five per cent of the population being returnees from the Gulf crisis. The rest are foreigners.

Jordan's population witnessed an annual growth rate of 4.7 per cent since the Kingdom's first census in 1952, according to the results released on Saturday. In 1952, the population was 586,200.

The average Jordanian family today has 6.2 members compared to 6.7 in 1979. Family size had noticeable decreases in three governorates: Zarqa, Madaba and Amman. Dr. Alawin said that this may be because women are better educated and work more today than in past years. However, five governorates saw a slight increase: Ma'raq, Jerash, Tafleeh, Ma'an and Aqaba, although Dr. Alawin did not give a possible reason for the increases in these areas.

The census found a noticeable decrease in the ratio of those below the age of 15. In 1979, they constituted 50 per cent, but in 1994 this age group constituted 41.4 per cent.

According to the census, the population breakdown

according to age was the following:

14 and under	1,712,382
15-19	483,548
20-29	832,375
30-39	460,886
40-49	268,540
50-64	273,944
65 and above	104,133
Unknown	3,650
Total	4,139,458

Almost 40 per cent of the population 15 years of age and above were single, while 55 per cent were married. Divorces accounted for 0.7 per cent, and 0.2 per cent were separated. Widows were only 3.3 per cent of this category. The marital status of the remaining 0.9 per cent was unknown.

Illiteracy among males and females decreased significantly since 1979, particularly among females. In 1979, 48.2 per cent of all women were illiterate compared to 20.6 per cent today. Illiteracy among men dropped by half — from 18.9 per cent in 1979 to 9.8 per cent. Among the 12 governorates, those with the highest rate of illiteracy are Ma'an (28.1 per cent) followed by Ma'raq (26.9 per cent), Tafleeh (22.5), and Karak (22.2). Amman had the lowest rate of illiteracy at 10.9 per cent.

There was also an increase in the level of education among both sexes. Those having at least secondary education constituted 37.2 per cent among males as opposed to 19.1 per cent in 1979, and 31.8 per cent among females against 10.2 per cent in 1979. The census states that this was largely due to a wider availability in educational services such as universities, colleges and other institutions. Also, it could also be attributed to an increase in personal desire to achieve higher education, the census results stated.

Prior to the census, the department of statistics conducted a systematic survey of 10 per cent of the population — whereby every tenth household was asked to participate — for a more structural view of Jordanian society.

(Continued on page 7)



MASS GRAVES: Rags and a bone lying on a site identified by investigators as the site of a mass grave of Muslims killed by Serbs in an area near Srebrenica in Bosnia-Herzegovina. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John Shattuck visited four sites near Srebrenica and told reporters afterwards that there was overwhelming evidence of "horrible crimes against humanity" (Reuters photo)

## Indian, Pakistani troops duel after rocket attack

NEW DELHI (Agencies) — Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged heavy fire along the disputed Kashmir border on Saturday after Pakistan claimed that Indian rocket strikes on Pakistani-held Kashmir killed more than 20 people.

Indian officials strongly denied staging Friday's rocket attacks, but the incident sent tensions soaring between the two countries which have fought three wars since independence in 1947, two of them over Kashmir.

Pakistani officials said 20 people died when a rocket slammed into a mosque during Friday prayers in the border village of Kahuta, and another two people were killed by a rocket in Hajira near the border town of Rawalakot.

A Pakistani defence spokesman in Islamabad described the rocket attacks as a "provocation" by India and a "major violation" of the tense demarcation line in the disputed Himalayan territory.

The official Associated Press of Pakistan quoted Pakistani Defence Minister Aftab Shaaban Mirani as warning New Delhi that Islamabad "has the capability to answer back in case of any aggression."

Mr. Mirani downplayed the risk of the conflict escalating, however, saying "we must not think that all recent happenings are leading towards Pakistan-India war."

"Rather this is all part of preparations for the next elections in India," he said in a reference to parliamentary elections in India expected in April.

In Jammu, the winter capital of Indian Kashmir, a state government spokesman said the rockets may have been fired by the Pakistanis themselves.

The state government categorically denies Pakistan's charge that Indian troops have fired a rocket on a mosque. "The spokesman told AFP."

"For the last several days, Pakistani troops have resorted to indiscriminate firing of rockets and medium machine guns on Indian villages," he said.

"The rocket that hit the mosque may have been one of two fired by Pakistani soldiers at India," the spokesman said. "It missed the target and damaged the mosque."

An Indian Defence Ministry spokesman in the Indian capital New Delhi also re-

jected the Pakistani charge, calling it "baseless," as did the senior Indian army officer in India's insurgency-hit Kashmir Valley.

"We categorically deny our hand in the rocket (attack)," Brigadier P.P.S. Bindra told AFP in Srinagar. "This thing has not happened in our sector."

"In fact, there has been no firing on the Line of Control (LOC, which divides Indian and Pakistani-held portions of Kashmir) for some time now," Brig. Bindra said.

Defence ministry sources in New Delhi said, however, that Indian troops had fired back on Friday after three rockets fired by Pakistani troops crashed into the Poonch district of Indian Kashmir.

The Pakistani attack did not cause any casualties, the sources said.

An estimated 10,000 people and top politicians of the Pakistan-administered Azad (free) Kashmir attended funeral prayers at Kahuta for the people killed by Friday's attack.

Two more people were killed by another rocket attack in the nearby Hajira area on Friday, the Azad Kashmir president, Sikandar Hayat, told reporters.

## Oman, Israel sign trade office accord

MUSCAT (R) — Oman and Israel signed on Saturday an agreement to set up commercial interest offices in each other's countries in the first such deal between the Jewish state and a Gulf Arab state. Oman's Foreign Ministry said.

"The Omani Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Israeli Foreign Ministry today signed a document on the establishment of representative commercial offices..." it said in a statement sent to Reuters.

The statement did not specify when the trade offices would be established.

The Foreign Ministry said the accord "comes as part of the peace process in the Middle East on the bilateral and multilateral level and is aimed at achieving a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region."

"This peace will consolidate security and stability for all peoples of the region," it added.

The agreement was the first such step by a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which also includes Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait.

Although the GCC backs the Middle East peace process, it has been reluctant to forge normal ties with the Jewish state.

On Jan. 22, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced in Washington that Israel and Tunisia will establish interest sections by April 15.

Oman announced in October that it had agreed in talks with Israel at the United Nations to exchange trade offices and other steps aimed at boosting cooperation.

Oman and Qatar have both hosted Middle East multilateral peace talks with Israeli participants, held public meetings with Israeli officials and received senior Israelis at home.

Oman was chosen by the multilateral round on regional water resources as the headquarters for a water desalination research centre. It is the only GCC state and one of only three Arab League members not to cut ties with Egypt when it became the first Arab state to sign a peace accord with Israel in 1979.

Israel has full diplomatic relations with Egypt and Jordan and an interests section arrangement with Morocco.

## Israeli patrol kills 4 PFLP-GC fighters

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli army patrol killed four Palestinian fighters as they tried to infiltrate the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in South Lebanon, military officials said Saturday.

An army spokesman said a unit of Israeli paratroopers intercepted a group of fighters overnight in the northeast of the self-declared "security zone" and killed three of the infiltrators in an initial skirmish.

A fourth fighter was discovered around dawn and was killed in a brief firefight, the spokesman said, adding the Israeli unit had suffered no casualties.

A spokesman for the Damascus-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) claimed the anti-Israeli attack in a statement issued in Beirut.

The front, which is opposed to the Palestinian autonomy accords with Israel, said the attack was launched to avenge the murder of Yahya Ayyash, the master bomb-maker for the militant group Hamas. Ayyash was killed by sus-

pected Israeli agents when his mobile phone blew up in his hand in the Gaza Strip on Jan. 5.

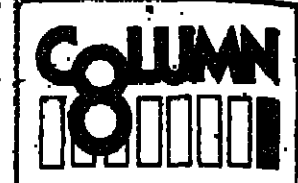
The PFLP-GC spokesman said all their fighters had returned safely, but added several Israeli soldiers were killed in the fighting.

A spokesman for the South Lebanon Army (SLA) said that the four men killed were members of the Palestinian group.

Security sources in South Lebanon reported heavy Israeli air activity over the Kfarhune district in the central sector of the "security zone," which Israeli and SLA forces control.

Israeli warplanes buzzed the region at low altitude while Cobra helicopter gunships opened fire at the northern edges of Kfarhune and the southern parts of the Bekaa Valley to flush out suspected guerrillas, security sources in Marjayoun, Lebanon, said.

Israeli gunners fired up to 150 shells overnight at the region after they spotted guerrillas heading for the occupied zone, they said.



## Yeltsin, deprived of tennis, turns to chess

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has taken up chess after doctors told him to give up tennis, the new president of the International Chess Federation said Saturday.

Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, who is also president of the Russian Republic of Kalmykia, presented Mr. Yeltsin with a chess set carved from Indian ivory and an honorary membership of the federation. "The president said that his doctors no longer allowed him to play tennis — and that he has taken up chess with pleasure," Mr. Ilyumzhinov said, quoted by the ITAR-TASS news agency.

Mr. Yeltsin, who will be 65 Thursday, has been a tennis fan; his personal trainer is the Russian sports minister. But he had to give up his favourite sport after heart troubles in July and October. Mr. Ilyumzhinov said Mr. Yeltsin was also looking forward to chess as an occasional pastime during the June presidential election, in which he is expected to seek a second term.

## Fergie offered \$1m to host chat show — report

LONDON (AFP) — The Duchess of York, whose financial woes made the headlines here last week, has been offered \$1 million to host her own chat show for a U.S. television network, the Daily Mail reported. The paper said the duchess — known as Fergie after her maiden name, Sarah Ferguson — is believed to be in "delicate negotiations" with executives from the CBS Broadcasting Network. The British press has recently reported that the 36-year-old duchess is mired in debt and has been cut off from royal financial support. But last weekend the duchess appeared to be improving her financial position when it emerged that she had struck a multi-million dollar deal with U.S. financiers to exploit her cartoon character, Budgie the Helicopter.

CBS bosses believe that the duchess, the estranged wife of Prince Andrew, could massively boost their network's ratings by attracting high-paying advertisers and big-name celebrities eager to appear with a British royal, according to the Daily Mail. The paper added that the programme's format is still under discussion. Estimates of the duchess's debt range from \$1.5 million to \$4.5 million.

## Last call as celebrity cafe shuts down in France

SAINT-TROPEZ, France (AFP) — The Cafe Des Arts De Saint-Tropez, watering hole of the rich and famous on the French Riviera for 40 years, has closed its doors, its staff said Saturday. Founded by one-time "Petanque" (French bowls) champion Georges Bain, the Cafe Des Arts was a magnet for celebrities who rallied together last year when it was first threatened by dispute over unapproved renovations. When a appeals court in Aix-en-Provence ruled in favour of the owner of the building that housed the cafe, Place Des Lices, Bain's widow Yvette Bain was forced to shut the cafe for good and lay off its 11 staff. The furniture was taken away Friday, but Yvette Bain is understood to be pursuing efforts to revive the cafe.

## FIS calls for leaders' release and dialogue

PARIS (R) — An exiled spokesman for Algeria's outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was quoted on Saturday as urging President Liamine Zeroual to free and then negotiate with jailed FIS chiefs to find an answer to the country's four-year-old violence.

"The FIS is still waiting for the president of the state, Liamine Zeroual, to take the initiative... by freeing the historical leadership of the FIS and starting negotiations with it in the interest of Algeria and its people," Rabah Kebir said in a statement quoted by the London-based Arabic language Al Hayat daily.

Mr. Kebir, who is based in Germany, appeared to be seeking to block a peace

move made earlier this month by 17 FIS founder members including Othman Aissani, once provisional executive bureau chief.

The 17 wrote to Mr. Zeroual saying their Islamic duty had forced them to accept "their responsibility, however heavy the price could be, to seek détente..." They urged him to take unspecified "practical measures embracing the oppressed people and raising (their) hope and confidence..."

Mr. Kebir said the Algerian authorities were now trying "to shape a domesticated leadership as an alternative to the FIS leadership," a move he described as worthless.

"FIS supporters and sympathisers are strongly attached to the legitimate and historical leadership under Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj," added Mr. Kebir. The FIS took a huge lead in the first round of Algeria's general elections in December 1991, despite Mr. Madani and Mr. Belhadj being already in jail awaiting trial on charges of undermining the state.

Violence broke out after the authorities in January 1992 scrapped the election. Mr. Madani and Mr. Belhadj, were later convicted and each sentenced to 12 years imprisonment.

Mr. Zeroual has held at least two series of talks with the two men to try to end the

violence. Last July, he announced that the latest negotiations had failed, and blamed FIS intransigence for the failure.

Last November, Mr. Zeroual won a crushing victory in a multi-candidate presidential poll which also saw a mass voter turnout despite militant threats to kill those who went to vote.

His victory and the turnout were seen as undermining the FIS political claim, based on their general election results, to be the voice of the Algerian people. Mr. Zeroual pledged to continue seeking dialogue with the opposition to try to end the violence in which an estimated 40,000 people have been killed.

## 4 killed

An armed Islamic group occupied the village of Agbal west of Algiers and cut the throats of four civilians, three from the same family, the newspaper Liberte reported Saturday.

The report said 20 men entered the village and kidnapped the four, including the local town council's driver, later murdering them.

The attack occurred less than a week after an Islamic group decapitated five victims in another village nearby, Qued Sebt, according to press reports.

Neither village has a self-defence group like those set up in several Algerian regions to defend communities against armed groups.

## 29 killed in Somali factional fighting

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — A clash between two factions in Somalia killed 29 people and wounded over 60 others, a radio station based by one of the militias reported on Saturday.

The radio station said militia loyal to warlord Mohammed Farah Aidede fought the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA), which is armed and supported by his rival Ali Mahdi Mohammad, for most of Friday north-west of the capital Mogadishu.

At least 70 people have been killed this month in factional fighting in Somalia, according to unconfirmed reports.

The devastated Horn of Africa country has been without central government since rebels led by Mr. Ali Mahdi and his former ally Aidede overthrew President Mohammad Siad Barre in 1991 plunging Somalia into anarchy.

International efforts to stop a famine resulting from the fighting degenerated into shoot-outs between Somali militias and U.N. forces, who pulled out last year.

The radio, loyal to Mr. Ali Mahdi, said 18 Aidede fighters and 11 members of the

RRA were killed, while a total of 63 from both sides were injured.

There was no independent confirmation of the clash.

Last Wednesday Mr. Ali Mahdi, who controls north Mogadishu, called for U.N.-sponsored talks aimed at trying to end the political deadlock and factional strife.

An Islamic court in north Mogadishu on Saturday decreed a midnight to dawn curfew with immediate effect and warned violators would face the death penalty.

Court officials said the curfew was aimed at reducing the number of illegal weapons being carried in the city.

Under the terms of the decree violators of the curfew face the death penalty as proscribed by Islamic Sharia law.

The curfew decision followed a meeting between Mr. Ali Mahdi and senior Islamic court judges held in response to the deaths of two men shot dead in street violence over the past three days.

Informed sources believed it could have been prompted by growing security problems in areas under Mr. Ali Mahdi's control, which

prompted him to threaten over his radio on Friday to deal firmly with "naughty elements of north Mogadishu."

As soon as the decree went into effect Friday, militiamen of the Islamic court poured into the dusty streets of north Mogadishu to search for unauthorised weapons, shouting "joogso" (stop) and giving security instructions to passers-by.

In the past three days, two men have been shot and killed on the streets of north Mogadishu, while a faction opposed Mr. Ali Mahdi has threatened to kill three senior of his supporters.

The threat was directed at General Aden Abdullahi Nur, chairman of the Somali Patriotic Movement; Somali National Front spokesman Isse Ugus Trabi; and Abdi Osman Farah, deputy chairman of the Hawade Clan's political organisation, the United Somali Congress Peace Movement. All are allied with Mr. Ali Mahdi.

The rival group is said to have accused the three of creating rivalry within the Mogadishu community.

## Indian commerce minister to visit Israel

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Commerce Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram was to leave here for Israel Saturday at the head of a four-day business mission aimed at boosting trade ties with the Jewish state, officials said. Mr. Chidambaram will lead a 13-member high-powered business team to participate in the first meeting of the Indo-Israel Trade and Economic Committee in Tel Aviv, they said. Briefing reporters here, Mr. Chidambaram said two-way annual trade had risen to more than 13 billion rupees (\$406 million) from three billion (\$93 million) in the 1991-92 financial year. But the growth was "modest," he said. The Indo-Israel Trade and Economic Committees were set up on Dec. 21 last year. India and Israel established diplomatic relations in January 1993 after a gap of 40 years.

## Palestinian fighters to go to self-rule areas

RASHIDIYEH (AFP) — A first group of 500 Palestinian fighters from Lebanon are to return to the newly autonomous areas in the Gaza Strip and West Bank over the next few weeks, a Palestinian official said Saturday. Most of them live in the 'Ain Al Hilweh refugee camp, which has 70,000 residents and is the largest in Lebanon, said Sultan Abul Aynain, head of Yasser Arafat's Fateh faction in Lebanon. He said a senior Palestinian delegation will visit Damascus and Beirut soon to discuss the details of the transfer.

## Egypt draws up plans to save monuments

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian authorities are to try to save historic monuments in Cairo's old city from pollution by closing down the numerous small factories and garages surrounding them, the daily Al Ahran reported Saturday. They plan to turn Al Muizz street, which is packed with monuments from Fatimid rulers between the 10th and 12th centuries, into a pedestrian zone from May. Egypt has already mounted campaigns using foreign and state finance to save Cairo's bustling old quarters from ruin.